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AGAIN MR. COOLIDGE has rallied to the defense of the embattled farmer. This time he has raised the tariff on onions. God forbid that any foreign-bred product should bar the home-grown onion from the mouths of American men, women, and children! The mere prospect of it is enough to bring tears to the eyes of any one who seriously considers the matter—not onion tears, but simple, plain, American tears of sympathy for one of our noblest and most popular vegetables. Cuba and Bermuda may suffer, if you please. To this we are utterly indifferent as long as the American onion grower is safe. Think what might happen if we should let the foreign onion monopolize our markets! It would not only throw thousands of American workers out of employment, but in time of war we should be entirely without onions for the American steak. Naturally all the red-blooded Americanism in Mr. Coolidge's veins has risen to the surface at this prospect and he has struck another far-reaching blow for the independence of America, for 100 per cent Americanism, for the right of each and every citizen to his own American onion. It was time that he did something like this. Is it not vastly to his discredit that he has calmly permitted the lowering of the tariff on three of the staple food articles of our day: mill-feed, Canadian-grown cherries, and Bob-White quail?

FROM SEVERAL POINTS OF VIEW the interference of the United States Shipping Board in the Cuban shipping situation appears to us most unfortunate. Not long ago the Cunard Steamship Company announced that its steamship Caronia would make several mid-winter voyages between New York and Havana. It does not seem that the United States has a monopoly upon trade with Cuba, for that country remains at least nominally sovereign and independent. But the Shipping Board at once jumped to the conclusion that this was an outrageous intervention in an American monopoly and promptly assigned to the Ward Line the President Roosevelt, one of the best of our transatlantic liners. More than that, it has permitted the Ward Line to lower its rates for the trip to a point which some shipping men declare will make the voyages of the American vessels unprofitable. Apparently the desire is to drive out British competition at any cost. We can see no justice in this. More than that, coming on top of the bitter criticism of us in England arising out of some unfortunate phases of the American handling of the Vestris case, it will further create unfriendliness on the other side, all the more to be regretted because of the prevailing friction in the matter of the navies of the two countries. The Cuban mid-winter passenger trade is certainly not worth the risk of further ill-will, especially as the Cunard Company has apparently no intention of keeping the Caronia on the Havana run except during the height of the tourist season.

IS MUSSOLINI DICTATOR in the United States as well as in Italy? Apparently so in some respects. In 1923 Carlo Tresca, editor of *Il Martello,* an Italian newspaper of New York City, was arrested by Department of Justice agents because of an editorial entitled Down with the Monarchy. When the case came to trial, the prosecution, probably aware that there was nothing actionable in the editorial in question, changed the charge to one of printing an advertisement of a book on birth control. In spite of the fact that the advertisement was never actually circulated, since the edition was held up in the New York post office, Mr. Tresca was convicted and served a prison sentence at Atlanta. Later it was established that the prosecution was instigated by the Italian Ambassador because of *Il Martello's* attacks on Fascism. Recently *Il Martello* was again held up in the New York post office, this time ostensibly because of an editorial on Christmas. Actually, Mr. Tresca has learned, the Italian Embassy is again hounding him through our own officials because of an editorial against Italo Balbo, Italian delegate to the aviation meeting in Washington. Is it not time that some of our puppets in Washington got up and let Benito sit down? We would rather have his fine Italian hand moving publicly than privately. And it might be a pleasant change to have a downright autocrat in place of a parcel of petty, frightened martinets.

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CHINA'S NATIONALIST GOVERNMENT is coming up in the world. Following the lead of our State Department, Great Britain, Italy, Belgium, Holland, Sweden, Portugal, and Denmark recognized Nanking and concluded treaties granting tariff autonomy. Among the countries having important interests in China only Japan holds aloof, but we predict that the Tanaka Government will not be able to hold this position much longer. Chinese hostility, temporarily diverted from the other Powers, is now centered upon Japan, and Japanese trade can ill afford it. When, a few weeks ago, it seemed that Great Britain might join Japan in refusal to recognize Nanking and in a partial revival of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, the Japanese position was much stronger than it is today. The British and Japanese navies could have continued indefinitely to delay Chinese tariff autonomy on the pretext that China's Government was "unstable," but the United States made such a policy embarrassing. Great Britain, hesitating between the Japanese policy of delay and the American policy of recognition, finally chose recognition—a choice which will strengthen Anglo-American cooperation in the Pacific and weaken the prestige of Japan. Japan's position in Manchuria was further weakened when on December 29 Chang Hsueh-liang, head of the Chinese Manchurian Government, officially accepted the authority of the Nationalists.

THE STRUGGLE between 250,000 iron and steel workers and their employers in the Ruhr has ended in a compromise. It will be recalled that the tripartite arbitration board which has handled German industrial disputes since 1923 awarded an increase to the workers—an award which the Minister of Labor declared binding. Although the increase was less than half of what the workers had asked, the industrialists refused to accept it, locked out the employees, and took the case into court. The lockout continued for five weeks. To save the locked-out families from starvation the Reichstag voted $5,000,000 for relief—an act which the well-fed employers denounced as evidence of "partiality" on the part of the Government. At last, by mutual agreement, Dr. Carl Severing, Minister of the Interior, was appointed to pass on the case, both sides agreeing to accept his award. That decision has just been announced. It gives an increase of from one to six pfennigs an hour according to district and character of work and reduces the working week by three hours. The arbitration board had awarded a general increase of seven pfennigs an hour. The shortening of the working week, though it sounds well, cannot be regarded as magnanimous, since payment is based on hours. The German workman is given three hours more a week in which to contemplate his poverty. Meanwhile the real issue—whether the arbitration-board awards can be enforced on employers—is yet to be decided. In the lowest court, under a reactionary judge, the award was declared illegal. The unions appealed the case and the next highest court reversed the decision. Now the employers are taking their case to the Supreme Court, where its legal aspects will be finally passed upon.

BUT EVEN IF THE AWARD is declared binding by the Supreme Court it will be only a beginning of the real fight, which is between the Government and individual owners. The Reichstag will have to decide now whether the Government can or will uphold the awards of the arbitration board—in other words, whether the Constitution can be enforced. As a writer in the London *Times* points out, the German Revolution, now ten years old, established a system which represented to men like Rathenau the beginnings of an industrial democracy in which owners and workers would be equal in responsibility and power. During these ten years this question has been overshadowed by the all-absorbing problems of rehabilitation which have had for their main purpose the throwing off of the slavery imposed upon Germany at Versailles by its self-righteous conquerors. The industrialists have taken every advantage of this plea of patriotism. Baron Krupp, in a speech in Essen recently, called upon Germans to hate the French. "This hate should be holy to us," said he. "It should be handed down from generation to generation until that hour when freedom and the fulfillment of the Fatherland's aims have been attained." Whether conscious or not, this is an example of the cry of national unity with which German industrialists have defeated labor's demands in the past. Now that the period of rehabilitation is ending, the cry is beginning to sound hollow in the ears of German workers. The industrialists will fight for their "right" to run their affairs without interference from the state, and the future alone can tell whether or not the Constitution of the German republic, at least with regard to the working class, is a reality.

THE SPECTACLE of a great and powerful government hunting down a small fir tree is ridiculous. Yet the Soviet Government has been doing just that during the holiday season. The celebration of Christmas was banned in Russia as part of the campaign against religion. Window displays were prohibited and the selling of Christmas trees was forbidden. Needless to report, Russians refused to be deprived of their festival and a thriving trade developed in bootlegged evergreens as well as Christmas gifts. It will be easy for Americans to imagine the scene in many Russian homes on Christmas Eve when proud hosts locked their doors and produced from a convenient clothes closet (or perhaps from the proverbial depths of a Russian beard) the "real stuff" in fir trees, while notes were exchanged about "the best place to get it." Someone should whisper in the ear of the GPU and its fierce minions that the feast of the winter solstice was celebrated long before it became known as Christmas, that Santa Claus is probably a dear old pagan in disguise, and that fir trees are as innocent of Christianity as the Russian snows they grow in. The Soviet Government would be wise to confine its attacks to more worldly and tangible enemies which it has at least a chance of defeating. The winter festival and fir trees and lighted candles—these are so securely rooted in the human affection of uncounted centuries that they can make anyone who attacks them, even though it is a powerful government in the twentieth century, look as foolish as Don Quixote.

WE ARE HAPPY to call attention to the article by Walter F. White, published elsewhere in this issue, on the recent Interracial Conference held in Washington under the auspices of a number of organizations interested in the Negro and his relations to his white fellow-citizens.

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For years *The Nation* advocated a commission to study the relations of the two dominating races, to be appointed under the authority of the President of the United States. Woodrow Wilson refused to create such a commission or to recommend its creation by Congress. He had no solution himself, as he said, for the Negro problem, and therefore he could not believe that there was any modern way of approach to it. President Harding recommended such a body to Congress, but Congress took no action. What such a commission could accomplish has now in large measure been achieved by the Washington Interracial Conference. It marks, in our judgment, a milestone in the progress of the Negro race. Certainly those who attended the conference and are veterans in the work were beyond words astounded and delighted by the amazing advance in discussing this problem by those of both races who were present, and above all by the clear-cut recognition of the truth that the only way to solution of the problem lies through full citizenship for the Negro and complete racial equality throughout the land. We have not, in recent years, reported anything more encouraging than this conference. And no feature was more gratifying than the outspokenness and courage of the Southern white men who contributed of their knowledge and understanding to its deliberations.

THE NEW SPIRIT in the South is showing itself in no saner and juster fashion than in the better attitude toward the Negro. The industrialization and urbanization of the region bring certain disadvantages but unquestionably are raising the colored race out of the status imposed upon it by slavery and the plantation. This is partly an economic necessity. The great migration of the Negro northward within recent years has convinced many Southerners that the race must be better treated if the labor supply of the region is to be preserved. But beyond this, the lessening of sectionalism and provincialism is creating a more reasonable and humane psychology. The same year in which four Southern States right-about-faced into the Republican Presidential column saw only nine lynchings, the lowest number in the forty years for which figures are available. According to the records of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 69 Fifth Avenue, New York City, this represents a notable reduction from the figures for 1927, when there were twenty-one lynchings, and for 1926, when there were thirty-four. Of the nine lynchings three were in Mississippi, two each in Louisiana and Texas, and one each in New Mexico and Missouri. All the victims were Negroes except one, who was a Mexican. We congratulate the South and the whole country on this notable advance in civilized living. It means infinitely more than the increased number of autos and radio sets.

DR. HILTON IRA JONES, a research chemist, told the Executives' Club of Chicago in a recent talk of a new poison gas called cacodyl isocyanide. One sniff of it, he said, would kill a man. A lot of it "would destroy armies as a man might snuff out a candle." He added that he talked reluctantly because the Government has made it known that it does not wish to have the subject discussed. He feels that the nations of the world are, however, not eager to use this poison in the next war-to-end-war, because it always kills. "I believe that they are seeking a gas that will incapacitate men and not kill them." This is partly denied by Major General A. A. Fries, chief of our Chemical Warfare Service. He admits that the Government is seeking a gas that will incapacitate rather than kill men, but he denies that any attempt is being made by the Government to suppress discussion of poison gases. This may well be. The fact is that every nation in Europe, as well as the United States, is seeking secretly to develop a gas which will do the utmost damage. We have recently seen a statement that forty-five tons of an existing gas would destroy all of London. Sir James Ervine of St. Andrew's University in Scotland, speaking last summer before the American Chemical Society, warned his hearers that the chemical industry was preparing materials more deadly by far than those used in the late war. He declared that no control of a country could prevent its chemists and its chemical factories from planning poison warfare and turning to the production thereof on a few hours' notice. All of which means that those who are working for the next war are literally working against the existence of civilization, and that those who fight for disarmament and permanent peace are trying to save humanity from annihilation.

A LIFETIME IN PRISON as a result of having had in one's possession four pints of gin is one of the penalties for living in the State of Michigan. In Michigan violation of the State prohibition act is a felony; persons convicted of four felonies are habitual criminals; and under the Habitual Criminals Act such offenders must be sentenced to prison for life. That this was not the intent of the framers of the prohibition act goes without saying. Only the most rabid defenders of prohibition would wish offenders a lifetime in jail; just as only the most violent of enforcement officials try to kill off violators of the statute by deliberately poisoning alcohol. As a result of the Michigan law, it is estimated that 2,000 persons are liable to life sentences for repeated violation of the prohibition act. If this large number of men and women were actually to be imprisoned for the balance of their lives, it would put a burden on the taxpayers of the commonwealth too heavy to be borne. New prisons would have to be built and supported by the citizens of the State. And it is impossible not to think that fresh thousands would be coming up every year for sentence. There is only one salutary feature about preposterous laws such as this one; it is so preposterous, so unjust, and above all so costly that it cannot remain long on the statute books.

WE LEARN WITH PROFOUND PLEASURE of the steady convalescence of Herbert Croly, editor of the *New Republic,* from the illness which has lately confined him to his house. Mr. Croly is not only one of our most distinguished and most independent-minded American journalists; he is one of the few in the craft who rejoice in an international renown. More than that, the years that have passed during his editorship have steadily widened the high regard in which Mr. Croly is held because of his knowledge, his modesty, and his disinterestedness. Anything which would hamper his career as editor of the journal which he has so ably conducted since its foundation would be a loss to American letters and the profession he adorns.

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Can War Make Peace?

A READER sends us one of M. E. Tracy's recent editorials in the Scripps-Howard newspapers and asks us for our comment. The article, which was written before Bolivia and Paraguay agreed to submit their differences to a commission set up by the Pan-American arbitration conference contains this statement:

> What the Pan-American conference should do is issue orders instead of making appeals. It should warn both Bolivia and Paraguay that their dispute over the Gran Chaco is properly subject to arbitration, that the two governments have solemnly sworn to let it be settled that way [Mr. Tracy refers to the Gondra arbitration agreement], that war represents a breach of faith, that the Western World will not stand for it, and that if either or both governments persist measures will be taken to compel respect not only for their treaty obligations but for the duty they owe to keep the peace.
>
> There are plenty of means by which the Pan-American conference could enforce its will. It could arrange for a general embargo on exports and imports affecting both countries. It could do the same with reference to foreign loans, trade, and financial transactions. It could take the Gran Chaco away from both Bolivia and Paraguay and put it under a mandate form of government.

Our correspondent says that the argument seems sound to him. "Yet I feel, from several years reading of *The Nation*, that you disagree, and I should like to know why." Our correspondent has not read our columns in vain. We do disagree, and we are glad in a brief way to indicate why. It is well to point out at the outset that the Pan-American arbitration conference has no authority to commit the governments behind it to the drastic action which Mr. Tracy proposes. But supposing that they all agreed to support such action, we believe it would be almost the worst thing that could happen to the cause of peace in the Western Hemisphere. Mr. Tracy, it is true, does not say directly that he would make war upon Bolivia and Paraguay in order to compel them not to make war upon each other, but his proposal to put the disputed territory under a mandate government implies that, while to enforce an economic embargo might mean armed conflict with the leading commercial nations of Europe. Indeed Mr. Tracy goes on to envisage a sea of gore and rather to exult in the vision:

> Before we get through with the job we are not only going to write a code but back it up in the same old fashioned way that all codes have been written and backed up.
>
> We are not going to reduce war without battle any more than we have reduced murder without killing.
>
> For the first few centuries, at least, any practical war prevention program may involve as much strife and bloodshed as would have occurred without it. The difference is that we would be struggling for an object that all humanity could visualize as worth while, instead of wasting life and property in futile attempts to grow great at each other's expense.

This is a frank restatement of the doctrine of war to end war—that chimera which dogs the peace movement at every turn. It is the doctrine which led to four years of unparalleled destruction and anguish in Europe only a decade ago, especially to our participation in it. Can anybody at this time point out one way in which the cause of peace or civilization was served by that carnage? The swashbuckling of the Kaiser was ended only to be superseded by that of Mussolini. And though few of our people recognize it, the hard fact is that the Europe of today fears the imperialism of the United States as much as the Europe of 1914 feared the imperialism of Germany. *The Nation* has a profound distrust of force as an instrument with which to make peace. We are aware that nations use—probably will long have to use—a certain amount of force within their borders to uphold their laws, but we do not believe that this requires the taking of human life except in rare instances. We do not believe with Mr. Tracy that capital punishment prevents murder; on the contrary, the whole history of crime suggests that the severest punishments have failed as deterrents and have lessened the respect for human life in the community. Mr. Tracy's conception of a holy war "that all humanity could visualize as worth while" is sheer sentimentality. That is what every nation has always drummed itself into believing in regard to any sordid adventure it has engaged in.

Some day, perhaps, we shall have a world government. Even sooner, probably, we shall have a unified government for the Western Hemisphere. But in the present stage of human development *The Nation* is fearful of any union of nations which relies upon a common army to enforce its wishes either within or without its limits. That is one of our chief fears in connection with the League of Nations. Theoretically, a world government with an army to carry out its orders would be splendid. Practically, with politics and government what they are today, such an arrangement would almost certainly lead to the smothering of minority action or progress. Had the League of Nations had the power ten years ago, for instance, it would almost certainly have crushed the experiment in Russia.

Our world is still one in which force plays a large part. No one now alive will ever see it otherwise, but the use of force is nevertheless diminishing both in extent and degree. The hope of civilization lies in accentuating that movement. Such things as police power, punishment for crime, the right of revolution, and civil war raise knotty questions for every believer in peace. It is very hard to work out a complete and logical philosophy to cover all these questions, but it is not difficult to reject a piece of such unnecessary and obvious meddling as that suggested by Mr. Tracy. Intervention in the affairs of a nation is always to be deplored, but if inevitable international action is to be preferred to interference by a single government. In its Latin-American policy the United States has unfortunately ignored this truth so far. But international action is certainly never justified unless international interests are vitally and continuously affected, which nobody would maintain in regard to the practically unknown region of the Gran Chaco.

Finally, events themselves have showed the needlessness of Mr. Tracy's war-making proposals, for since he set them forth a little patience and tact have led both Bolivia and Paraguay to accept peaceful arbitration.

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Enforcing Prohibition

THE chief value in the prize-winning plan for prohibition enforcement written for the Durant essay-competition by Major Chester P. Mills lies not so much in the plan itself as in the public discussion it has aroused. Mr. Durant got his money's worth. By spending $30,000 he secured over 23,000 essays and several million dollars' worth of newspaper space for the discussion. If the immediate, practical result of the competition seems rather slender, that is no argument against millionaires who seek to affect public opinion by offering handsome prizes.

As for Major Mills's plan to enforce prohibition it would have been very valuable three years ago, but it has been outdated by the recent changes in the bootlegging industry. The three main sources of intoxicating liquor in America are imports, home-made drinks, and industrial alcohol. Major Mills's plan, except for several generalizations about law enforcement, covers only the industrial-alcohol problem. For that particular branch of the bootlegging trade his plan seems as good as any. He proposes that the federal government keep much closer watch than at present over the plants which make specially denatured alcohol and pretend to use it for the manufacture of perfume and other products. He would require every manufacturer who alleges that he is using alcohol for legal manufacturing to notify prohibition officers when and where his manufacturing takes place. He would issue permits to use alcohol in manufacturing only after the most rigorous inspection of the supply of alcohol used and the alleged market—and then he would make the permits temporary.

These are all good suggestions and Major Mills himself made effective use of them when he was Federal Prohibition Administrator of the New York district in 1926 and 1927, but they cover only one of the three main sources of illicit liquor. When Major Mills was in the prohibition service industrial alcohol was the main source of bootleg liquor; today the scene has shifted, partly because the very methods that Major Mills suggested have been applied and have driven the bootleggers toward rum-running and domestic stills.

When Major Mills's plan was shown to Federal Prohibition Commissioner James M. Doran, the latter remarked, according to the New York *Times:* "There is no plan in Mills's formula that deals with the major problem of prohibition now, the manufacture of bootleg alcohol on a large scale from corn sugar." Moreover, there is no solution in the Mills plan for the vast smuggling from Canada which, according to the estimates of Mabel Walker Willebrandt, approximate $25,000,000 a year. Perhaps, also, the close supervision which Major Mills suggests over manufacturing plants which use alcohol would be impractical in operation. It would require dictatorial powers in the hands of local prohibition administrators, with immense temptation to share in the spoils of laxity.

The Mills plan, if rigorously enforced, would greatly reduce the supply of alcohol for gin but it would not affect the supply of wine or of applejack, which last, according to the New York *Herald Tribune,* is rapidly becoming the national drink. Of course it could not affect the home production of beer and wine because such production does not come within the limits of the Volstead act. These are serious omissions, since we probably consume about 200,000,000 gallons of home-made wine a year.

On the very day when the Durant award was given to Major Mills, an anti-prohibition body, the Moderation League, issued a report showing that our arrests for drunkenness are quantitatively back to the pre-war level. Proportionately, however, the arrests for drunkenness are still lower than they were in the days of the saloon, and the deaths from alcoholism are very much fewer. Dr. Haven Emerson, writing in the *Survey Graphic* for December, pointed out sixteen social "benefits due chiefly if not wholly to the direct and indirect results of prohibition." Chief of these are the reduction of the death-rate from alcoholism and cirrhosis of the liver to 75 per cent and 57 per cent respectively of the preprohibition level, and the decrease of delinquency from alcoholism. The most disquieting fact concerning our present type of liquor trade is that for seven years the arrests for drunkenness and the deaths from alcoholism have gone steadily upward. Many of the social gains which Dr. Emerson describes may be wiped out if the present tendencies continue.

Behind the quarrel between Wets and Drys over the interpretation of vital and criminal statistics lies the deeper question of the relation of minority to majority opinion in our governmental frame-work. The Drys are in the saddle but they cannot subdue the horse. The Drys have the Constitution and the law with them, not to mention the Hoover landslide, but the Wet minority is getting more open and successful in its defiance every day. Essay-contests are good things for schoolboys and writers, but we doubt if the most perfect plan to enforce prohibition will change the American practice by so much as a single cocktail as long as public opinion is so sharply divided.

At the Crossroads

BOLIVIA and Paraguay are to arbitrate the question as to who attacked whom first in the Chaco, but not—not yet, at any rate—the larger question of to whom the Chaco should belong. But on the other side of the Pacific the Sino-Japanese negotiations have been dropped because Japan refused to withdraw her troops from the Chinese province of Shantung; in Western Asia the Afghan tribes are still in arms and the king and queen who sought to modernize their mountain kingdom are almost refugees, while on the borders Russian and British troops watch jealously, armed to the teeth and suspicious of each other. Japan's new budget pares expenses here and there, but increases the army and navy appropriations, and all through Russia the children are subject to military training, though the government preaches disarmament to the unheeding outside world. In the United States the proponents of the fifteen-cruiser bill have made a bargain with the advocates of the Kellogg peace pact to let both bills pass.

The British, of course, are still the British, arguing with sweet reasonableness that whatever other people's navies may be their own is simply a modest instrument of defense. Without the navy, they point out, their trade routes and

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food supplies would be endangered, hence they must have the greatest navy in the world; not realizing that the argument would be as valid for Cuba or Denmark or Holland, not to mention Japan, and that the only permanent security for one nation is permanent security for all. But if the British are near-sighted, Americans at least should understand and sympathize, for in the world today there are none but Americans left to equal the British in complacent assumption that one nation (always one's own) has an inherent right to a bigger and stronger and more overpowering "defense" than all the rest. Meanwhile, Poincaré is still France's chosen leader, and so long as that able but unreconstructed son of Lorraine holds the tiller the world will feel a little uncertain about French policy.

"Under the color of disarmament conferences," as Salvador de Madariaga, former secretary of the disarmament section of the League of Nations, has pointed out with peculiar authority, "the nations have discussed armaments, and agreements are almost impossible, as proved by last year's meeting at Geneva." It is a little silly for such a man as J. A. Spender to refer to "*possible* competition in naval armaments" between England and the United States. There is naval rivalry between the two Anglo-Saxon countries, and there are inflammable differences between the two peoples. It will be safer to face them and talk about them than to deny their existence and assume that it is impossible for Englishmen or Americans to become exasperated and unreasonable.

There is a rivalry in land armaments on the Continent too, and the recent Anglo-French agreement, however emphatically repudiated by British public opinion, gave France an international indorsement of her conscription policy which only explicit official dissent can now withdraw. Germany has nearly 700,000 fewer soldiers today than in 1913 (though the former chief of the Reichswehr has just admitted that he has sought to develop the Reichswehr as the skeleton of a much larger potential army); there are a quarter of a million fewer soldiers in the territory that was once Austria-Hungary than there were in 1913; and Soviet Russia, Poland, and the Baltic republics combined fall 278,000 short of the Czar's army before the war. But France, Belgium, Great Britain, Spain, Greece, and Rumania, at the last available reports, all showed increased armies; and Italy and Jugoslavia, which for a time went slightly below the 1913 level, have recently enlarged their armies to an appreciable extent.

It is no situation for facile optimism. Yet there are mitigating factors. That Bolivia and Paraguay, after snarling at each other like two angry small boys, did finally agree to shelve their arms and submit to arbitration was a signal victory for the peaceful public opinion of the world. Two decades ago—perhaps even one decade ago—they would have been permitted to fight to their heart's content. Today the League of Nations in Europe, and the Pan-American bodies which center in Washington, provide channels for expression of the world's will for peace. Of course, Bolivia and Paraguay are relatively weak nations, and this embryonic world opinion which finds it easy to discipline the little nations leaves the great pretty much alone. But not quite alone. Not one of the Great Powers really wanted to sign the Kellogg pact. It was public opinion which compelled the foreign offices to take the outlawing of war seriously.

We Smell a Rat

IT is not astonishing nor even particularly interesting that the National Civic Federation should have issued a new pronunciamento against American recognition of Soviet Russia; such statements have become a settled habit with Mr. Easley, Mr. Woll, and their fellow-defenders of other people's property. The interesting thing about the federation's latest statement is the manner and the moment of its appearance.

A letter was recently sent by Matthew Woll, acting president of the organization, to some thousands of persons inviting them to give their approval—on an attached card—to a declaration supporting "our Government's steadfast policy in refusing to recognize the Soviet regime." Sometime later a second letter, signed this time by Ralph M. Easley, was similarly broadcast, urging a prompt response and stating that it was "proposed to have a committee call on President-elect Hoover in the near future to present our declaration." Ultimately a list of names of some four hundred "representative" Americans was appended to the declaration together with the statement that there were also "five thousand others," and the document was apparently ready for the attention of our next President.

But, for some reason not yet explained, this great manifesto was not either presented or sent to Mr. Hoover. It was, instead, addressed and dispatched to President Coolidge, who will have about as much to do with the future recognition or non-recognition of Russia as Mr. Easley and Mr. Woll themselves. In spite of the five thousand, four hundred names, the declaration was ignored by the press; Mr. Coolidge, if he responded at all, did so inaudibly; and Mr. Hoover continued to tour South America.

Before considering the incident closed, certain speculations may be indulged in. The signers of the declaration of the National Civic Federation included many eminent citizens, led by the Honorable Elihu Root and the Honorable John W. Davis. The churches, the world of business, conservative labor bodies, and the D. A. R. were well represented. But it was more interesting to note the names that were missing. Among business men and bankers one searched in vain for anyone connected with J. P. Morgan, the National City Bank, the Chase National Bank, Kuhn, Loeb and Company, the Equitable Trust, Dillon Read, or the Bankers' Trust. Nor did the list contain representatives of the United States Steel, General Electric, International Harvester, General Motors, Ford, or Bethlehem Steel.

One can only guess why the statement was sent to President Coolidge instead of being presented by a committee to Mr. Hoover. Was it because so many important names were missing? Or was it, perhaps, suggested to the makers of the manifesto that it might be embarrassing to the incoming Administration to receive an appeal of this sort? And why did only two New York newspapers print the declaration—the *Times* on the forty-seventh page, the *World* equally obscurely? Why did the *Herald Tribune* not print at all this passionate statement of its own attitude toward the recognition of Russia? Does the *Herald Tribune* also deem it indiscreet to spread anti-Soviet propaganda just before Mr. Hoover steps into the President's chair?

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The Nation's Honor Roll for 1928

WE give below the names of certain Americans who have during the past year distinguished themselves from the liberal point of view in one field or another. Without suggesting that these names are alone worthy of honorable mention, the editors of *The Nation* offer them as a group of which the United States may be proud.

Politics

Senator GEORGE W. NORRIS of Nebraska, for outstanding leadership of the progressive bloc in the Senate.

NORMAN THOMAS, for intelligent and vigorous leadership of the Socialist Party, as its Presidential candidate; in his vision, his program, and his personal power outdistancing both the Republican and Democratic candidates.

ALFRED E. SMITH, for making a Presidential campaign lively, interesting, and educational.

Administration

The FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION, for its searching investigation of our public utilities and the revelation of the methods used by power propagandists to subvert public opinion in press, schools, and colleges.

The UNITED STATES AIR MAIL, for maintaining a highly efficient service at home and for inaugurating a route between the United States and Mexico.

Business and Industry

The CHASE NATIONAL BANK of New York, for continuing to do business with Russia, even though frowned upon by an ultra-conservative State Department.

SIDNEY HILLMAN, for the extension of collective bargaining in the men's clothing industry.

JOSEPHINE ROCHE, for bringing industrial democracy to a Colorado coal mine.

Drama

EUGENE O'NEILL, for once more proving himself America's greatest dramatist, with "Strange Interlude."

The THEATER GUILD, for spreading the light of better plays by its road companies, and by its continuing demonstration that good plays, adequately represented, pay well.

MAXWELL ANDERSON and HAROLD HICKERSON, for their play "Gods of the Lightning," a spirited dramatization of the story of Sacco and Vanzetti.

Music

The FLONZALEY QUARTET, now disbanding after twenty-five years of distinguished artistry in the field of chamber music.

WALTER DAMROSCH, for his pioneer work in creating a public taste for serious music by means of the radio.

Books

SIDNEY B. FAY of Smith College, for a profoundly important contribution to war history, "Origins of the World War."

ALBERT J. BEVERIDGE, for his monumental biography of Abraham Lincoln, posthumously published.

The AMERICAN COUNCIL OF LEARNED SOCIETIES and the NEW YORK *Times*, for making possible the publication of the "Dictionary of American Biography," of which the first volume has just appeared.

STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT, for "John Brown's Body," an epic of the Civil War.

MARK VAN DOREN, for "An Anthology of World Poetry," the first comprehensive collection, in English translation, of the great poetry of the world.

MARGARET SANGER, for "Motherhood in Bondage," the product of a twenty-five-year fight for birth control.

MORRIS L. ERNST and WILLIAM SEAGLE, for their thoroughly documented and intelligent study of censorship, "To the Pure. . ."

ERNEST GRUENING, for "Mexico and Its Heritage," called "the classic work on Mexico of our time."

UPTON SINCLAIR, for dramatizing, in "Boston," the story of Sacco and Vanzetti.

WANDA GAG, for a new children's classic, "Millions of Cats."

Journalism

The ST. LOUIS *Post-Dispatch*, for fifty years of crusading journalism.

CARLTON BEALS of Mexico City, for venturing at the risk of his life into the jungles of Nicaragua in order to bring out for publication in *The Nation* the true and colorful story of Sandino and his fight against American intervention.

The *Outlook* and SILAS BENT, journalist, for unearthing and publishing the facts as to Vanzetti's innocence in the Bridgewater hold-up.

Public Service

JOHN DEWEY, for seeing clearly and reporting justly, in the *New Republic*, the Russia of today, and for continuing leadership in American education.

HARRY F. WARD, for leadership, as president of the American Civil Liberties Union, in the fight against militarism in the American schools.

JUDGE FRANKLIN GRIFFIN, presiding judge in the Mooney case, who sentenced Mooney to death, but who, since learning of new evidence, has been untiring in his efforts to bring about the release of Mooney and Billings.

WALTER W. MOREY, for inventing the teletypesetter, and FRANK E. GANNETT, for sponsoring the experiments and adopting the new machine throughout his organization.

THE AMERICAN TRADE DELEGATION TO RUSSIA, for its survey of economic and social conditions in the Soviet Republic.

PAXTON HIBBEN, who until the day of his death was indefatigable in his efforts on behalf of liberal causes in general, and who was on the point of completing an authoritative study of William Jennings Bryan.

JULIUS ROSENWALD, for his magnificent gift of $5,000,000 to help settle Jewish colonists in the Crimea and the Ukraine.

Architecture

CASS GILBERT of New York, for the newly completed New York Life Insurance Company Building.

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It Seems to Heywood Broun

W. E. WOODWARD'S "Meet General Grant" tells a thrilling story and neglects none of the dramatic values. It seems curious that the silent soldier has figured so little in American literature of our own day. Surely there is very comfortable doctrine in this fable of a rather dull-witted man who rose to fame after innumerable failures. How did Bruce Barton ever come to miss it? But I prefer the Woodward manner. He does not dawdle much in any effort to point a moral.

Still, I have one count to make against the author of this engrossing book. It could readily be shorter. When will the authors of the world resolve to be brief and let who will be clever? And in this case the way of compression is so easy. Mr. Woodward has felt the necessity of providing background and outlining the causes of the Civil War as they seem to him. This is an unnecessary contribution. The causes of the war were of little moment to Grant. They are almost wholly irrelevant in any story of his life.

As a matter of fact, I find it difficult to see eye to eye with Woodward in his historical hypothesis. If my information is correct Mr. Woodward is Southern by birth and radical by political philosophy. Accordingly he is torn by the unconscious sway of early memories and the pull of Marxian doctrine. He would have us believe that ancient fallacy that the Civil War was not fought around the issue of slavery. All Southerners like to promulgate this theory because even now secession is a debatable point in pure constitutional law. Even though it may be a mistaken notion of the intention of the founders, secession is at least a respectable and honest contention. There is no man alive who cares to defend slavery. If the war raged chiefly around the slavery issue then it is hard to trump up any glory for the Southern cause. On this basis the South was wrong beyond defense.

But the more I read of Civil War days the deeper does my conviction grow that it was among the most useless of all armed conflicts. There are many partial pacifists who say that while they think war an evil thing they would not deny themselves, or all mankind, the privilege of fighting in a righteous cause. Max Eastman, as I remember, would have stood at Marathon or possibly it was Yorktown. And to many the Civil War seems a bright spot in the record of aimless slaughter. To some it was distinctly a blow for betterment, and blood was not shed in vain.

I think it was. In fact I would class the Civil War as among the most useless of all attempts to solve a pressing problem by the sword. If we assume that it was basically a war fought over the slavery question we still cannot acquit the men who made the conflict inevitable. Negroes have been inclined to remember this particular war as something which struck off their shackles. Yet in the last analysis it seems to me that it is the Negro who should complain most bitterly of the consequences of the Civil War. The freedom which he won is gravely compromised. Jim Crowism seems to me distinctly a product of gunfire. The South was conquered but never convinced.

Mr. Woodward does not hesitate to call William Lloyd Garrison a fanatic but no man has ever been more fully justified by history. Though Garrison's vigor of expression may have had its part in the creation of bitterness, his fundamental scheme was wholly sound. He was the sanest man of his day. Sanity usually seems an aberration when all the rest of the world has gone quite mad. It is well to remember that the great Abolitionist did not urge emancipation through armed conflict. He felt that freedom for the Negro could and should be obtained through the process of education. I am willing to admit that he might not have been the most tactful of schoolmasters, and yet the great bitterness which his pamphlets aroused in the South was not an indication of an unbridgeable cleavage of opinion. Modern psychology has recognized the fact that men fight most fiercely against those arguments which almost persuade them. If the Southerners had actually felt in their hearts that Garrison was an insane man suggesting economic changes wholly fantastic they could have afforded to take his proposals good humoredly and have laughed them off. There was at least a partial recognition of the rightness of his contentions even among his bitterest foes.

At this distance it seems almost impossible to comprehend just how and why a war should have been fought over the slavery issue. If we accept the Socialist theory of economic determinism it must appear that the South fought for the privilege of cutting its own throat. The Confederacy had nothing to win. It was bankrupt by defeat, but so would it have been by victory. Even before the war a certain number of Southern writers had pointed out the obvious fact that slave labor was economically unsound. Jefferson realized this, and Washington, too, had dreamed of a day when the system should not endure. Woodward is inclined to blame the war upon the ingenuity of a Yankee. He believes that but for Eli Whitney and the cotton gin slavery would have been abandoned long before the war clouds gathered. Yet even in the best years of the planters they earned a ridiculously inadquate return upon their invested capital. It does not seem to me that the Marx formula fits the Civil War at all. Neither side did nor could profit economically by the war.

It was not business but sentiment which fomented the strife. The Southern notion of aristocracy was at stake. This was a drawing-room and not a counting-house war. The pity of it all lies in the fact that neither side had the patience to count ten. Within twenty years the issues which made the Civil War would have disappeared or been well on their way to extinction. It is perhaps fantastical to assume that there would have been no such thing as race prejudice if slavery had been abolished by the volition of the Southern States, and yet I think it not unreasonable to believe that it might never have taken its present hideous and violent form if emancipation had not come as a war measure. Southern ambivalence toward the Negro depends upon a sense of guilt. The stuff which every Georgian pulls in speakeasies about his old Negro Mammy is not insincere. It is the sentimental arc in the swing of the pendulum. Most guilty men will eventually be moved to make atonement if only they can

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have the satisfied feeling which comes of a free-will offering. But when a bayonet is thrust against anybody's belly he will die rather than admit that he is in the wrong. Or he will live to perpetuate the wrong.

In spirit the South has never emancipated the Negro. Where there has been blood there can never be generosity or even simple justice. The words which should be spoken after any armed conflict are peculiarly appropriate to the Civil War—If we had only waited!

HEYWOOD BROUN

Mr. Hoover Must Face the Music!

By PAUL Y. ANDERSON

Washington, D. C., December 29

WITH the salutes of South American guns and the hosannas of South American mobs still echoing pleasantly in his ears, Herbert Hoover will return next week to one of the most disheartening messes that ever spoiled the homecoming of a President-elect. Politics is a perennial mess, legislation is a present mess, and the future is a prospective mess. He must face the job-hunters, and he will find that feeding the Belgians was a picnic compared with filling the mouths of the hungry politicians and their rapacious dependents. He must decide whether to have an extra session of Congress, and he will be damned if he does and boiled in oil if he doesn't. Although Mr. Coolidge is still President, it is to Mr. Hoover that Administration leaders will appeal for assistance in breaking the jam on Capitol Hill. Just why he decided to come on to Washington, instead of tarrying pleasantly in Florida, as he had intended, has not been made clear, either here or in dispatches from the Utah. One guess is that, knowing he must face the music sooner or later, he chose to face it sooner. Another is that business interests are demanding an end to the uncertainty which exists about the extra session. When Mr. Hoover sailed for South America to get away from the politicians, I have no doubt he took it for granted that all plans for the future after March 4 would have to wait upon his return. The terrible suspense to which some of his Washington "friends" might thus be put would produce no intolerable pangs in his breast. But perhaps it has recently been conveyed to him that some of these "friends," instead of waiting, were proceeding to make his plans for him, and that unless he hastened back he might later find himself confronted with the choice of accepting the unacceptable or kicking over the already accomplished. Either would be disagreeable. His susceptibility to sudden panic is well known. In any case, he is coming, and all good people should pity him and pray for him.

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LAME-duck sessions (which will not disappear until a selfish minority in the House of Representatives is compelled by public opinion to pass the Norris Resolution) are notorious for their legislative jams, and the present one is no exception. The Senate has, by a most unnatural operation, made Siamese twins of the Kellogg treaty and the cruiser bill, which have the same natural affinity as a bulldog and a badger. The advantage is all with the treaty. It has fewer enemies, principally for the reason that its sponsors and supporters have about succeeded in persuading everyone that it doesn't mean anything. Senator Jim Reed, who is opposed to foreign treaties generally, on the theory, as he says, that "it is damned easy to get into trouble and damned hard to get out," questioned Secretary Kellogg at length before the Foreign Relations Committee in an effort to show that the treaty means something, but its author supplied nothing that the Senator could get his teeth into. Senator Borah has announced that when the treaty and the cruiser bill come simultaneously before the Senate when it reconvenes January 3, he will move to take up consideration of the treaty, and will keep it constantly before the Chamber until it is disposed of. The cruiser advocates realize that ratification of the treaty in advance puts an argument in the hands of their adversaries—the argument that the country should not prepare for war immediately after pledging itself to peace. But they also realize that ratification is assured anyway, and that to prolong debate on it might delay consideration of the cruiser bill to a date when a hostile filibuster might succeed.

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THEY have troubles enough without that. The public is gradually awakening to the fact that the fifteen 10,000-ton cruisers provided in the bill can be intended for possible use only against Great Britain. The idea of such a war is thoroughly unpopular, and Senators are beginning to hear from home. As the bill passed the House at the last session, and as it stands now, it provides for laying down the cruisers within three years. President Coolidge's recommendation that the time limit be removed, and the period for beginning construction left open, is repugnant to the Big Navy Crowd, who furnish the backbone of the bill's support. Borah has announced that he will introduce an amendment to cut the number from fifteen to ten, and another amendment, providing only for five, will be offered later. Nevertheless, were it not for complications of a larger nature, the bill would be almost certain to pass in its present form. Nobody expects the President to veto it, even if his recommendation is ignored. It has powerful and well-organized backing. In the last century both the army and navy have learned a lot of tricks about getting what they want from Congress.

* * * * *

IN this connection, the National Broadcasting Company will be well advised to note the use to which its network is being put. In the course of his weekly radio talk on the political situation last Wednesday night, Frederick William Wile delivered what amounted to a speech in favor of the bill, interspersed with bitter and invidious allusions to "the great pacifist lobby" which he represented as conspiring to defeat this "patriotic" measure. I advocate no censorship on discussions over the radio or elsewhere. But Mr. Wile is regularly presented to the radio audience as an

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impartial observer, giving an uncolored and unbiased review of the facts. He has a right to take sides, but his partisan opinions should be offered for what they are, and opposing partisans should be accorded an equal opportunity to answer them. To make much over the "pacifist lobby" consisting of a few church organizations and Quaker societies, while omitting all mention of the really formidable lobby maintained by the Big Navy clique, is amusing enough in Washington to those who know the facts. Unfortunately, it is not likely that many radio listeners know those facts. The broadcasting companies will have only themselves to blame if such a policy results in further regulation by Congress.

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THE question of farm legislation is, as observant persons might suspect, producing an inordinate amount of high and low politics, some of which may affect the destinies of other legislation. It will be recalled that Candidate Hoover, yielding to Senator Borah's campaign insistence, pledged himself to call an extra session of Congress to deal with farm relief unless adequate relief should be provided during the short (present) session. The measure now before Congress is the old McNary-Haugen bill, minus the equalization fee. About all it provides is a farm board, whose members the President would appoint. Naturally, the farm-bloc Senators have about as much use for the bill in this condition as a farmer would have for a one-legged horse. Even if they have to take it for want of something better, they do not want it now, because they do not want Mr. Coolidge to appoint the board. In other words, if the farmers are to receive only advice, they want to receive it from persons in whom they have some confidence. Senators have been given to understand that President Coolidge will graciously consent to leave the appointments to his successor if Congress will consent to enact the emasculated and decapitated measure. Like Speaker Longworth and other leaders whose first thought is for the party, Mr. Coolidge scents danger in an extra session. Few persons believe that Mr. Hoover would deliberately choose to open his Administration with Congress on his hands.

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YET there is Senator Borah, disclaiming that failure to call an extra session would be a betrayal of a solemn pledge. And there are farm Senators like Brookhart, who say and who believe that Hoover has "a real solution" of the farm problem—and a mandate from the voters to put it into effect. More significant, probably, there is the group which wants an extra session, not to relieve the farmers, but to revise the tariff upward on manufactured articles. This group has formed a queer alliance with the farm bloc to the end of obtaining an extra session. Suppose that Mr. Hoover announces during his forthcoming visit that he considers the present McNary-Haugen bill an "adequate" form of farm relief, whose enactment at the present session would remove the necessity for an extra session. Of course, that would amount to a confession that his heralded, personal, patented "solution" of the farm problem never existed, or that he was not very fond of it. Senator Borah would immediately cease to be the President-elect's most eloquent champion, and would become his most eloquent adversary. There is hardly a doubt that the extra-sessionists would combine to block legislation in the present session for the purpose of forcing an extra session. Borah has declared he would not hesitate in such a course, even if it meant the death of the cruiser bill. He would have abundant assistance. Hence it seems likely, when all is considered, that poor Mr. Hoover will bow to the messy inevitable, and announce that a special session will be held. If it is held, I make bold to forecast now that never in history has any legislative session been invoked for the relief of agriculture which will produce so much relief for tariff-protected industries.

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TWO axioms—that unscrupulous men are seldom deterred by experience, and that American millionaires are a gullible class—are strikingly verified by facts which have been disclosed concerning the establishment and plans of the Industrial Conservation Board. This institution, promoted and developed by one W. J. Sylvester, and having offices in Chicago, announces its intention of becoming the greatest propaganda agency ever heard of in any country. Its stated aim is not only to "keep the Government out of business," but to keep the States and municipalities out as well. Its methods, set forth in a bulletin which has been sent to prospective supporters, include some already made familiar by the power trust, as well as others that are novel. Thus, it proposes to "tie in" the newspapers and the professors of economics, to formulate courses of study to be introduced in the grade schools, high schools, colleges, and universities, to employ a troupe of speakers, to employ the radio and the movies for "educational" purposes, to distribute a clipsheet of "short, snappy news articles showing the evils of government in business," and to publish a magazine for distribution by employers among their employees. Promoter Sylvester states that he has enlisted the moral and financial support of leading business men throughout the country, and his literature presents an advisory board bearing fifty-four well-known names. Among them is that of Martin Insull, brother of Samuel and head of the parent Insull company controlling public utilities throughout the country; J. J. Tynan, vice-president of the Bethlehem Steel Company; E. A. St. John, president of the National Surety Company; George M. Reynolds, chairman of the Board of the Continental National Bank of Chicago, and others comparable in wealth, prominence, and influence. One would suppose that the experience of the power companies before the Federal Trade Commission would have been a lesson and a warning. Sylvester's plan for raising revenue contemplates levying on each supporting concern an annual quota consisting of one mill for each $100 of net income. The ease with which supposedly hard-headed millionaires can be frightened into giving up money for such schemes almost provokes the suspicion that there is something on their consciences which makes them unreasonably fearful. A promoter comes to them with the statement that "nationalization of the country's resources is rapidly becoming a fact" and so alarms them that they agree to pay him handsomely to stave off the "peril." A country schoolboy who gave momentary credence to a tale of such palpable absurdity would instantly become known as the village dunce. But Mr. Sylvester apparently knows his field. He announces that $20,000 already has been contributed, and that plenty more is available. The United States Chamber of Commerce, whose officials apparently retain some sense of proportion, announces that it has no connection with the organization.

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England's Coal Tragedy

By JOHN A. HOBSON

SINCE the "hungry forties" of last century there has been no industrial calamity in England comparable in the magnitude and intensity of its distress with the present condition of our coal-fields in Durham, South Wales, and some other industrial areas. Like most tragedies it is the joint product of fate and human folly. A famous economist of half a century ago remarked that "Coal is the foundation of English prosperity." Before the war it was becoming manifest that this foundation was itself undermined. Oil and hydro-electricity were rapidly advancing as sources of power, and new rich coal-measures were being opened up in countries hitherto dependent upon British exports. In the United States and Germany better technical equipment and business organization were outcompeting our older and worse-managed mines. Statistics of coal and the closely related iron and steel industries made this manifest. Under normal conditions the weaker mines would have gradually closed down, and the young potential miners migrated into town industries. This process was going on when the war broke out, and the ravenous demand for munitions not merely kept alive the dying mines, but hastened the development of new pits in South Yorkshire, Nottingham, and Kent. This post-war trade boom bred an insane optimism, and the mining population and its output were raised above the pre-war magnitude. When the collapse of trade came in 1922 there was an obstinate refusal to face the inevitable, and incredible faith in some early recovery which would make everything right. Even when this optimism could no longer be maintained, and the seriousness of the situation began to be realized, our attitude was one of procrastination. Commissions sat and reported, their reports were discussed, but all serious action was postponed. The governmental compulsion, essential to eliminate the waste of excessive competition, and to force organization of the twelve hundred mining companies into effective units of production and marketing, never matured. The country was in the grip of a conservatism which would not brook such drastic interference with private property and enterprise. And so the situation has been allowed to drift from bad to worse. The brief periods of recovery, during the stoppage in the Ruhr, and after the coal strike, helped to feed the illusion that some miraculous revival of world trade would raise coal prices and revive our export trade. When our export trade again collapsed, the coal owners with an almost incredible foolishness demanded reduction of wages and increase of hours, so as to compete with the lower costs of Germany and other foreigners. They forced the Government to pass the Eight Hours Act and were surprised to find that any enlarged output still further reduced prices and profits.

To cut a long tale short, mine owners, miners, Government, and people are at last forced to recognize that whole groups of mines, drawn into liquidation, are destined never to reopen, and that some quarter of a million miners cannot hope ever to return to their former employment. Here is a population of at least a million souls, not scattered over the whole community, but densely massed in groups of villages where mining has been the sole occupation, lying in helpless idleness and destitution. Hitherto they have been struggling on in semi-starvation, dependent upon the unemployment "dole" and poor-law relief for keeping body and soul together. Now these sources are failing, local taxation funds are exhausted, and large numbers of men are disqualified for further unemployed relief. What is to be done? There are two problems, one economic, the other human. But the solutions of these problems do not harmonize—they conflict. Sound business demands that each mining district be organized both for production and for selling as a single unit, that the uneconomic pits be entirely closed down, instead of working fewer shifts, and that a quota of production be fixed for each district and each working mine. The Northern and Scottish coal-fields have already adopted a scheme along these lines, and South Wales, hitherto refusing to limit the output for each mine, will probably be driven to this course. This, however, is not enough. What is needed is a full national agreement, amounting to a cartel, by which the English mining industry may come to a working arrangement with German and other foreign organizations for demarcation of export markets and fixing of national outputs for world selling. For the home market the most pressing need is a radical revolution in selling. The enormous discrepancy between pit-head and retail prices shows scandalous waste in transport and marketing, and local price-manipulations which everywhere oppress the poorer classes, who must buy in small quantities. The trade itself, now just awakening to the situation, contemplates a national selling agency. But such an agency, operated by the owners and large merchants, will carry all the perils of monopoly. Its price-fixing and its economies of distribution will all go to profits: the miner and the consumer will be helpless in its hands.

But no "rationalization" of our coal industry will restore its earlier prosperity or enable the weaker mines to pay their way. Its reconstruction and other economies will mean more unemployment. It will do nothing to feed and clothe the million starving people in the coal-fields: it will only make their hopeless situation more evident. They cannot work, they cannot pay their way, they cannot move. The normal remedy for loss of work is to find other work elsewhere. But, in our present widespread trade depression (with a million unemployed in other than the mining industry) it seems impossible for miners to leave the only trade they know to seek work in other trades for which they have no training and no aptitude. The special appeal which the Premier made a few months ago to employers in other trades to fill vacant posts by taking on unemployed miners has, of course, met with no response. How could it? Now suddenly, as another winter comes on, our press and public have awakened to the tragic situation, and are assuming the attitude of "God's sakers," as H. G. Wells designates those who wait until the trouble has occurred and then cry "For God's sake, let us do something!" Charitable agencies are now busily organizing relief, mayors are conferring, town-hall meetings are being held, distressed Welsh villages,

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"units of need," are being attached to well-to-do communities, "units of help," a national campaign of charity is beginning. But this, of course, is merely palliative. It may help many thousands of mining families to tide over the miseries of another winter. But even for temporary relief it will not be really adequate. As I write, the Lord Mayor's Fund stands at less than £150,000, not more than half a week's maintenance of the mining families in need. Well meaning and useful as this type of charitable aid may be, it is a positive danger if it serves to turn men's eyes from the larger responsibility of the Government to find adequate means of coping with a situation so largely of their making. For the trouble, as we see, is not appreciably due to the faults of either mine owners or miners, but, partly, to unpredicted changes in the technique of industry and the course of commerce, partly, to the public policy of the war. Better than any other instance it serves to dispel the fatuous individualism which would saddle every business and every trade with a separate responsibility for its success and failure, and for the wealth or poverty of those who take part in it. The amount of coal a Durham miner can turn out will, doubtless, depend upon his own skill and industry, the thickness of the seam and the equipment of the mine, but the price it commands and the real profits and real wages it enables to be paid depend upon the operation of the whole body of other industries that constitute the market. This social determination of the value of coal applies to all industries, but it affects certain fundamental industries with special force. Much against its will our Government will be compelled by public opinion and the poignancy of the case to confront the obligation to safeguard this vital industry by dealing with its human wreckage. As soon as the futility of private charity is proved, Government must take action. The general lines of such action are already demarcated. The older miners must be pensioned off. The young, thousands of green lads who have never had a chance of work, must be educated and trained for other occupations when they are available. Churchill's recent raid upon the Road Fund must be reversed, so that more money may be available for great arterial roads. The Housing Subsidy must be retained, and larger credits found for local authorities to undertake public works in prosperous districts. There is a plain economic as well as a moral obligation on the state, not merely to keep these destitute people alive, but to maintain their health and to find work for them. The "right to work" is sometimes eyed askance as a revolutionary demand. But it is nothing else than a plain corollary of the right to life. For life without work is as degrading to the personal character as it is costly to the community. This coal calamity may teach a serviceable lesson in the only way we will consent to learn, by painful experience.

The Not-So-Gay White Way

By JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

"KAHN $210,000 in Red on 'Americana'; and Off." "B'way Legits in Panic"; "'Mima' Has Belasco On Hip for $300,000."

These headlines, chosen from a single preholiday issue of our lively and well-informed contemporary *Variety*, may need a little translation to make them comprehensible to some, but even to the uninitiated they must have an ominous sound. "The Legit" includes all musical comedies and reviews as well as all dramatic entertainments and "The Legit" is in a worse state financially than it has been in seven or eight years.

During the week before Christmas nearly half of all the theaters on Broadway were dark, and though this week is always a bad one, at least twice as many houses were vacant than during the corresponding period last year. Nor was the collapse by any means sudden or unexpected, for at no time during the entire present season have all the playhouses been open. Week after week during the autumn, six, eight, and even twelve new productions have made their appearance, but the majority of them "flopped" before new ones could be prepared to take their place, until discouraged managers began to give up the attempt to send good money after bad.

Hope springs eternal and the new year is here, but there is no real reason for supposing that it will be any less calamitous. Just before Christmas there were nineteen new dramatic productions which had held on for six weeks or more, but of these two ("Strange Interlude" and "Diamond Lil") were held over from last season, two were already announced to close, and all but five had been regularly offered at Mr. Le Bang's cut-rate agency. Certain (though by no means all) of the musical shows have gone well, but of the new dramatic pieces not more than five could possibly be considered really successful.

Various explanations have been offered of this unhappy state of affairs. That well-worn alibi the competition of the movies has been refurbished, and then fortified by despairing references to the popularity of the new talking pictures. The radio which keeps people home and the speak-easy which claims them for half the night have also been invoked, but the prize for ingenuity should go to some amateur psychologist who correlated the decline of the theater with the increase of America's prosperity. The drama, he argues, is always a compensation. It satisfies our unfulfilled desires or at least makes us forget. But the American people are too contented to need its services. When stocks go up as fast as they have during the last few weeks there are no unsatisfied desires and nothing to forget. The glamor of the financial pages is greater than that of the footlights.

Certainly, however, there is no need for such ingenuity if one is willing to lay the blame upon the theater itself. There are two very simple reasons sufficient in themselves to account for the persistence with which the large public has stayed away from the playhouses this winter and they may just as well be stated with brutal frankness: most of the dramatic entertainments offered this year cost too much and were worth too little.

There is a certain small class which does not care

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how much it pays for its amusement. It is recruited either from the provinces in the shape of persons who are determined to have a wild time in New York no matter what it costs, or from the frankly wealthy, possibly even the newly wealthy, class. It can afford any price for a pair of theater tickets just as it can afford a box at the opera; but this class is not large enough to support fifty theaters in New York not all of which can possibly prosper without the liberal patronage of that middle class whose members cannot afford to go very often to the play under present conditions.

The theoretical price of tickets for orchestra seats ranges from $3 for some of the less elaborate dramatic pieces to $6.60 for the popular musical shows, but this printed price has hardly more meaning than the par value of a stock. Admission to the failures or to those plays which are managing to maintain only a precarious existence can usually be had at a little more than one-half of the nominal price, while there is no limit to what one may be asked by the speculators for a ticket to one of the outstanding successes. The innocent who asks at the box office for seats at a "hit" will be met with contempt which the ticket-seller does not even think it worth while to conceal; if the prospective theater-patron goes to the agency in the expectation of paying no more than the legal premium of $.50 he will receive a no less unpleasant surprise. Supposing, for example, he would like to take his wife and two guests to one of the more popular reviews. He may very well discover that the expedition has cost him $60 in tickets alone. If he is rich he may not consider this excessive, but even those who inhabit the upper reaches of the upper middle class cannot afford to go to the theater very often under these lavishly extravagant conditions.

No experiment with theaters in inexpensive neighborhoods has ever been very successful in New York, and Broadway rents being what they are it is not likely that the nominal price of theater tickets can be much reduced. Three dollars for the dramatic productions and five for the reviews is probably fair, but there is no good reason why the fixed price should not be maintained and it would be if the theatrical business were conducted as a business instead of being, as it is, in the hands of men who, for the most part, conduct it according to the traditions and the practices of the mountebank.

The theatrical world belongs as much to the world of the midway and the medicine show as it does to the world of either art or business. Its methods are devious even when they are not downright dishonest. In it one is not expected to deal fairly or tell the truth, and it is as hard to prevent most producers from conspiring with the speculators to get extra profits as it would be to persuade the circus men to stop short-changing the yokels. Other businesses have got beyond the "public be damned" attitude. Other people who have something to sell count the value of public good-will. But the theater is a racket. You get what you can by whatever means you can and you trust to luck that the public will be as gullible next year as this. In justice to the managers, one may observe that the public often is.

There are only two or three theaters and only two or three producers who stand for anything. Most of them make no attempt to build up confidence in their integrity or to gain a following. Each new production is an individual gamble and the producer does not feel that he has anything to lose from the methods by which it is exploited. If he did he might consider the rage of a regular patron who is asked double the price for a ticket; he has never been willing to do so and his collusion has blocked every effort to stop illegal speculation. Perhaps a few disastrous seasons might make him willing to consider his position. If they were to result in the establishment of a central bureau where tickets for all theaters were sold at the price marked upon them the public would not be too sorry.

It is certain, then, that theater tickets cost too much and it is no less certain that most of those sold this year would have been dear at half the price. Difficult as it is to find seats for certain pieces and much as one must pay when one finds them, the public will put up with the trouble and the expense if it is eager enough to see a particular performance. "Strange Interlude," an excellent play of great artistic merit, promises to go on into its second year; "The Front Page," a popular melodrama, has been drawing near-capacity houses since early fall; and "Animal Crackers," the Marx Brothers' review, plays to a crowded auditorium every night. But no one will pay so much or take such great trouble for anything not superlatively good in its own way and there have been very few superlatively good things this season.

Some three hundred new productions are made in New York every year. It is obvious that they cannot all be masterpieces, and it is equally obvious that theaters as numerous as those of New York can be supported only by a population which visits them frequently and more or less as a matter of course. If most people can go only occasionally and if they wait until something which seems definitely worth a sacrifice comes along, then most of the common run of plays must inevitably fail.

Neither the movies nor the talkies can compete with a really good play. The cinema has always appealed chiefly because it is cheap and accessible and it is dangerous only to a theater which is either too hard to get into or not worth the effort involved. Whatever its defects as an art it has been, as a business, conducted upon a far sounder basis than the legitimate theater. It has considered its public, it has done everything it could think of to make move-going easy, and it has reaped a reward. A very considerable part of its audience does not come because it thinks the films very good, but because, mediocre as they are, they involve neither great expense nor great inconvenience. The public will pay a reasonable price and go through a reasonable amount of preliminary effort to see something that it really wants to see, but if it is merely going to be bored it can be bored at a lower rate, and with infinitely less trouble and advance preparation, in the movie just around the corner.

Probably there are too many theaters. Probably no great harm would be done to the art of the theater if that number were reduced, and reduced it certainly will be unless the managers show better reason than they have shown this season why some of the playhouses should be kept open. Perhaps they do the best they can so far as plays are concerned. Personally I have never seen any evidence that there is a considerable number of masterpieces knocking in vain at the producers' doors. But these same producers might try a new plan. On the theory that the public is neither as ignorant nor as gullible as it often looks and acts, they might make the theater a little less difficult to go to.

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Solving America's Race Problem

By WALTER WHITE

THE most significant gesture ever made in these United States toward solution of the race problem in America occurred at Washington in December. For the first time representatives of the most conservative groups met with those whose stand on the race problem is much further toward the left. For three and a half days the Right and the Left, and those between the two extremes, from the North and from the South, whites and Negroes, discussed aspects of race relations in a manner which varied from extreme caution to complete frankness.

Very little, if anything, new was said either in the formal speeches or the discussions. That, however, is not to be wondered at when one considers the vast number of printed and spoken words which have surrounded the race problem for three centuries. The significance of this discussion can best be seen by a casual glance at the list of those who attended the National Interracial Conference. There were representatives of the Federal Children's Bureau, the Interracial Commission, the United States Department of Labor, the Rosenwald, Phelps Stokes, and Milbank Memorial Funds, the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial, and the Russell Sage Foundations; representatives of Catholic and Protestant churches, organizations such as the National Urban League and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, college presidents from North and South. All shades of opinion were represented and there was evinced a genuine desire on the part of most of those present to know the facts.

The subjects discussed are on the program of every conference of this sort—recreation, education, industry, agriculture, housing, health, law enforcement, citizenship, and topics of like nature. As attendance was confined to those actually working in these various fields, the limitation resulted in expert discussion in the main instead of the usual Fourth of July oratory. This condition had further been insured by the fact that the conference itself had been preceded by nearly two years of preparation and by a full year of careful research done by an excellent research committee of which Graham R. Taylor was chairman and Charles S. Johnson of Fisk University, formerly editor of *Opportunity,* was secretary.

The range of information and of honesty in presenting material reached its highest point in the address toward the end of the conference by Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois of the *Crisis;* the nadir in casuistic defense of exclusion of Negroes from labor unions by a representative of the American Federation of Labor. This spokesman for organized labor, John P. Frey, unfortunately, spoke at an evening meeting —the one serious mistake made by the program makers; had he been on a morning or afternoon program there would have been opportunity given the audience to puncture some of his assertions. The nature of his address can best be shown by considering his justification of exclusion of Negroes from labor unions on the ground that where the economic interests of white and Negro labor clashed, the federation had considered the "practical" interest of the federation and excluded the Negro. "Unskilled labor must become skilled before it can gain rights," he declared; union labor keeps the Negro out of the skilled trades—and a spokesman of the A. F. of L. calmly faces an intelligent audience and coolly justifies to his own satisfaction such a course.

Of far different character was the address of Dr. Du Bois at the next to the last meeting of the conference. Ruthlessly and with unanswerable logic Dr. Du Bois emphasized the futility of applying surface panaceas to specific evils arising out of the race problem when such application does not go to the root of the whole question. "A disfranchised working class in modern industrial civilization," he declared, "is worse than helpless. It is a menace not simply to itself but to every group in the community. It will suffer in health, it will be compelled to be ignorant, it will work on the lowest industrial plane, it will live in poverty, it will be the plaything of mobs, and it will be insulted by caste restrictions. No amount of good-will on the part of philanthropists or on the part of the ordinary citizen will change these facts."

The effect upon the section of the country where Negro disfranchisement is rife and upon the United States as a whole was clearly set forth. Dr. Du Bois had no illusions that free access to the ballot box would solve all of the Negro's problems any more than it has solved the problems of white workers. Such denial, however, he pointed out, had the effect already quoted, had made democracy for the Negro impossible, and in turn made democracy unattainable for all of America.

Dr. Du Bois's address was received in various ways both by the white as well as the Negro members of the audience. Next to me sat a young white Southerner who replied, when I asked him if any whites had commented on Dr. Du Bois's address, "What is there for them to say?" Two of the Negroes who commented were religiously minded individuals. One of them adroitly hinted that it was easy for one to criticize from afar. The other counseled caution, evoking memories of the post-Civil War era when "federal bayonets were unsuccessfully used to get the ballot for the Negro." To this waving of the bloody shirt another Negro, James Weldon Johnson, pointed out succinctly that it was absurd to talk of bayonets. He cited the instance of Negroes in El Paso, Texas, who had, through the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, carried to the United States Supreme Court and won in that tribunal a decision which ended disfranchisement through the so-called white Democratic primary. Mr. Johnson cited other cases in Florida, Arkansas, and Virginia where similar legal steps had been taken, successfully for the Negroes' case, and pointed out that no race riots or other clashes had followed such action.

And so throughout the conference the discussion varied from scientific discussions of Negro health by Dr. Louis I. Dublin and by Dr. Raymond Pearl of the Negro's bio-

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logical superiority in six of nine characteristics over the whites, all the way to the realm of purely emotional reactions to the Negroes' problems. Dr. Herbert Adolphus Miller of Ohio State University pointed out some of the harmful effects of pseudo-science in the attitude expressed by America toward the Negro; Dr. Thorsten Sellin of the University of Pennsylvania showed how most of the criminal statistics regarding the Negro were worse than useless. Negro educators in various fields of education ranging from the purely industrial type to that of highest education told of their efforts to move the mountains of ignorance which oppression and inertia had heaped upon the Negro's shoulders. And through it all there ran a note of sincerity and good humor which marked a great advance over the purely bombastic agitation and recrimination which has unfortunately characterized discussions of the race problems in past years.

A significant and encouraging situation greeted the close of the conference. The meeting as a whole had been sponsored by sixteen national organizations interested directly or indirectly in the problem of race relations. Because of the careful planning and the intelligence of most of the discussions, it was inevitable that there should be those who wished to see the conference made a permanent organization. The committee on future plans, however, recommended that the conference, having done its work, disband and not bring into existence another organization. This was done and the National Interracial Conference, upon publication of its report of the proceedings and of the report of the findings committee, will come to an end within a few weeks.

If any individual or individuals can be singled out for praise, the one most responsible for the success is Mary Van Kleeck of the Russell Sage Foundation. With infinite tact, good humor, and wisdom, she served as chairman. She and Dr. George E. Haynes of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ, as secretary, did a vast amount of the preparation for the conference. The success of their efforts marks a new development of the race problem in the nearer approach to unity of purpose and effort against specific evils, and in taking discussion of this most difficult of American problems out of the realm of hysteria and conjecture into the clear light of scientific and factual approach toward problems which hitherto have seemed unsolvable.

In the Driftway

IT always pays the Drifter to be unusually asinine, because as a result of his wilder outbursts somebody generally sends in a good letter of protest which fills his column for the next week and makes it possible for him to catch up with a little much-needed sleep. In consequence of last week's plinth of folly the Drifter is happy (and how relieved!) to offer the following communication from what seems to be an irate mother:

> Of course we all know that you are an old bachelor who probably has never even seen a child, much less a sick one. As the mother of two sick children at present, I do not go so far as to invite you to envy me, but I do rise to defend the child specialists whom you so recklessly malign. You say you would like to "be a fashionable child specialist for about five years," after which you believe it would be possible for you to retire with your ill-gotten gains to live a life of ease—as if you didn't live one already!

* * * * *

CHILD specialists, Mr. Drifter, like most other members of the medical profession, and unlike all the drifters I have ever seen, work many more than eight hours a day at trying and disagreeable tasks. They poke into ears and noses, they squint at feet and teeth, they prescribe strange diets and stranger exercises for the young ones of the present day; in your day, as you suggest, these young ones were allowed to die of diphtheria, measles, "indigestion," "running ears," "bone diseases," and what not. For some of their activities specialists receive fat fees—from $5 a visit up! Think of that. And for a good many others, performed in hospital clinics and in the sickrooms of the poor, they receive little or nothing. I have never known of a specialist who did not temper his fee to the income of his patient or that of his patient's parents. That means that rich people pay more, and poor people like you and me pay less. Not ethical perhaps, but the best system we have just now.

* * * * *

I ONCE had occasion to call for consultation the leading child specialist in a certain disease in the United States. He was gentle and quick with my sick child; he was a youngish man with a rather wistful manner; for his advice, which proved effective, he charged $50. Afterward I was discussing him with my regular physician. "He is at the top of his profession," she told me. "He works all the time—at research when he is not treating patients. Yet I doubt if he earns $50,000 a year."

* * * * *

NOW don't shout at me that you would be content with $50,000 a year for just one year. So would I. But consider the leading lawyers in the country, the presidents of the largest banks, the directors of the most prosperous corporations. For them, $50,000 a year would be pin money. No, Mr. Drifter, you have picked the wrong profession. If you want to get rich quick without work, do what a simple school-ma'am of my acquaintance did four years ago. She was the recipient of a legacy of $2,900. The income on that sum, she decided, would not be worth talking about; the principal was not much more. She thought herself justified in speculating with the whole amount. After careful investigation, conducted entirely on her own hook, without advice from any financial expert, she bought, in 1924, 1,000 shares of stock in the Radio Corporation of America at $3 a share. The other day she sold out her holdings—for $364,000.

* * * * *

AND Rabbi D. de Sola Pool sends the following note:

> I propose my wife and myself for charter members of your "Readers' Mutual Insurance Society." We have long had an arrangement by which we divide the family reading between us, and report to one another on what we have read. When I can answer that inevitable question with "No, but my wife has read it, and she says . . .," I save not only my reputation, but also that of the family. We are looking forward to the day when we shall be able to admit our children into the "Family Mutual Protective Society Against Embarrassing Literary Questioners."

THE DRIFTER

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Correspondence

The New Astigmatism

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: As one who has enjoyed and admired Mr. Krutch's articles, I am sorry to see him taking one of those slaps at socialism that are popular now with many young aesthetes. I refer to a sentence in his review of Clive Bell's "Civilization" in *The Nation* of December 12, in which he speaks of "those rather naive humanitarians who have been content to assume that it (civilization) was synonymous with the equitable distribution of wealth."

Socialism, of course, attracts its share of superficial and tiresome people, although not as many these days as bore us with the jargon of popular psychology or the *blague* of aesthetics, with physics and the fourth dimension close runners-up. But isn't the current reaction from the old uncritical humanitarian afflatus going too far and producing astigmatism of another and meaner kind? A good deal of Marx remains after time and Clive Bell have done their worst. The conflict between heredity and environment is not yet resolved, and perhaps never will be. But after balancing the tory biologists' discouraging experiments on successive generations of green peas or gnats with Dr. Watson's assertion that he could make a violin virtuoso of any baby by proper "conditioning," we can at least believe that several generations of security, good food, cleanliness, and leisure for everybody would increase the proportion of civilized individuals.

Meanwhile, the effort to attain an equitable distribution of wealth is itself an attack on institutions that foster essentially uncivilized emotions, which are then rationalized into dicta concerning human nature that are hostile to the development of fine individuals and fatal to the flowering of a civilized society. I refer of course to the emotions of fear and acquisitiveness, and to the ugly and ungenerous impulses and the tawdry values that spring from them. It is these that reduce Mr. Bell's civilized men to a handful of individuals living in a vacuum. And it is these that are the real target of socialist attack. Socialists have talked about slums and bread-lines, but the animus in most of them, concealed often even from themselves, is a dislike of the aesthetic climate in which they find themselves. They share this dislike with Mr. Bell. The difference is that Mr. Bell is one of those individuals who believe they can escape the climate by climbing into a high tower and staying there, and who really enjoy standing on its parapet and shouting that their sky is blue.

On their part, the Socialists have obscured the aesthetic, not to say moral, origins of their revolt by their emphasis on slums, undernourishment, and similar atrocities. Now that post-war prosperity has mitigated these evils in America, the Socialists find themselves as dissatisfied as ever, but they will remain impotent until they face the truth and begin all over again with the admission that it is the *manners* of capitalism, and its blighting effect on the individual's taste and character rather than his stomach, that offend them. In their new attack they need and should have the help of the aesthetes, of those whose first concern is with the quality of the individual, with finding a good life for those who are free to choose.

Meanwhile, I envy the Communists and wish I could be one. I would join tomorrow if they had a section for lazy and cowardly persons, unamenable to discipline, the kind that get shot by the Cheka in the second or third year instead of the first.

Sausalito, California, December 14 George P. West

The Black Man's Burden

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: Capital has never presented as sinister and malevolent a front to the Negro laborer as have the white labor unions. It is far less criminal to work labor twelve hours a day in sweat-shops at a minimum wage without safety appliances than it is to rob the Negro laborer out of his job by a self-righteous attack against the "open shop." I know a Negro bricklayer, a skilled workman, whose father was a bricklayer before him. He has no other vocation. He has spent his best years learning his trade. He has a family and the winter is coming. He would join a union gladly, but white unions won't admit him. Our liberal white "friends" urge us not to irritate white unions by being "scabs." They tell us to wait until they can persuade the white unions to see the light. But who can wait when winter has come and there is no coal, no food?

Negro boys looking for a vocation find a blank wall. They are not allowed to apprentice. They are refused admission to white unions. And yet, well-meaning social workers wonder at the "inherent criminal disposition of the Negro." In the face of these facts can you give me any good reason for being a Socialist or joining with the "organized forces of labor to overthrow a despotic capitalistic regime"? Why shouldn't Negro labor organize to defeat every attempt of white labor to bargain collectively with capital? Why shouldn't we join in this cutthroat game and help capital throttle white labor? This it seems to me is the only way to make white labor see the light. And so I urge all Negro laborers to adopt as their motto: "Hurrah for the Scab and the Open Shop and To Hell with the Unions."

Cambridge, Mass., December 28 John P. Davis

Thoreau's College Papers

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: I am trying to secure accurate texts of Henry Thoreau's college essays. Middlebury College, the Morgan Library, and the Huntington Library have most of the manuscripts. I should appreciate learning of the whereabouts of the few others of these college essays by Thoreau.

Chapel Hill, N. C., December 11 Raymond Adams

American Hope

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: Having read Josephine Costigan's letter which you entitled Catholic Despair, I am writing this letter which you may name American Hope. The votes in my family do not number eighteen, but few as they are they shall be counted; and always I hope on the side of justice, ideals, and principle. We Catholics should not be cast down—rather should we stand straighter and braver after this baptism of fire. Catholicism has not been annihilated nor has religious liberty perished by the sordid aspects of the campaign. The part played by Catholics from the dawn of our history can never be obliterated and it does not need recital here. Never, whether in times of peace or of war, have Catholics failed to give their best. Some day we shall have worthy men of Catholic and Jewish faith in the White House and that day is not far distant. When it is remembered that Governor Smith received the support of 15,000,000 people and these of every creed, there is hope even in defeat.

Cedar Rapids, Ia., December 3 Prudence M. Rocca

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Castigation

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: In an editorial in your issue of December 12 you said that you see no reason for the poor showing of the "ablest candidate whom the Socialist Party has ever presented except the stupidity and conservatism of the voters."

If failure to support Mr. Thomas is an evidence of stupidity and conservatism, then certainly *The Nation* must be included in the category of the stupid and conservative.

Framingham, Mass., December 13 John S. Keir

Football Deflation

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: You ask whether students are at last realizing "the unimportance of being earnest about a football victory." Not only can that be, but there is also evidence of what appears to be definite antagonism against a football victory because of its resultant underemphasis of better things. The inclosed editorial is from the *Daily Cardinal* of Sunday, November 25, a day after great excitement over the Wisconsin-Minnesota football game, the winning of which would have given Wisconsin a Big Ten football championship.

> There is something unwholesome, something jarring, about the feverish activity of these last few days. It is a premonition of the state of turmoil in which the university will find itself if Wisconsin remains a "threat" in Big Ten football.
>
> For many years Wisconsin has been unimportant in intercollegiate athletics. During this period the university has attracted a number of outstanding scholars and a cosmopolitan student body. It has introduced educational innovations that have attracted world-wide attention. . . . It is a sad commentary on modern higher education that a university should be the object of a vast pilgrimage and concentration of public attention for no better reason than to exhibit the line-bucking and pass-catching proclivities of a mere handful of its students.

Madison, Wisconsin, December 2 Henry Sidney

Sport in England

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: Your note on the lack of enthusiasm recently shown at Yale for a rally makes an English student or schoolboy furiously to think. Accounts of American sport convey to us one idea only—that to your people the great thing is never the game but the victory. We hear of the "cheer-leader" and the system of mass cat-calling which he conducts; we hear vaguely, also, of huge rallies before the game, intended to hypnotize the other side into a state of nerves by means of sheer lung-power.

I should like to describe the English attitude toward sport in school and college. There are no rallies, no cheer-parties or prayers for victory. One small notice on the board apprises the school or college of a forthcoming match—rugger, soccer, or cricket, as the case may be. Everybody determines to turn out and cheer; and of course we do cheer, but not necessarily our own side, unless it deserves it. "Go on the school" is our stock cry, naturally, but a boundary or a clever catch by the other side is applauded just as heartily. And whether we win or lose, we are best satisfied when the game itself has been a good one. A man who gets his "colours" is respected simply because it is the hall-mark of a sportsman.

London, England, December 11 E. H. M. Hyatt

Is Jewish Social Work Different from General Social Work?

(1)". . . *Jewish social work . . . requires not only a thorough knowledge of the general principles underlying social work, but also adequate knowledge of Jewish cultural background. . . .*" (*See Pamphlet, p. 3.*)

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A Page of Poems

Old Tune

By MARK VAN DOREN

The words of this old woeful song
Float so merrily along,
Out of ages that they sweeten
Though the hearts of men were eaten.
This old tale of souls that brake
Falls softly on us, flake by flake.

He raised the knife;
She spread her gown
And begged for life;
But only a frown
Got ever that wife;
Got ever that wife,
Hey derrikin down.

This tune that came so long a road
Has shed the sorrow of its load.
Though its burden will endure
The air is merciful and pure.
This bitter tale of one that died,
Leaves only honey in our side.

The knife it fell;
She spread her coat
And made a well
Of that white throat.
She made a well
For him in hell,
High dollikin dote.
So merrily float
With him in hell,
High dollikin dote.

Country House: Midnight

By MELVILLE CANE

The key of the lamp clicks,
And as it locks the light,
The full black tide rolls in.

This had been a room—
Warm wing-chair,
Peacocks strutting over chintz,
Blake's "Job,"
Telephone.

Black now floods the human spaces,
Drenches the hearth,
Topples every shape to shapelessness.

High, where a clock companionably sat,
A metal rat's-tooth
Evenly nicks and nibbles.

Tide Cycle

By WILBERT SNOW

High Tide

You are different every morning, rocky shore:
Today the full flood-tide comes welling through
Each crevice of each boulder at my door,
And, risen level with the meadow rue,
The jewel-weed, purple asters, wild sweet-peas,
And morning-glories bordering the bank,
Coaxes the driftwood tossed by windy seas
To shove out here and there a needed plank
And bridge the gap between the sea and land;
Uplifted by your slow rise I am caught
Twice over as a seagull takes his stand—
Illumined whiteness in a rounded spot
Upon a ruddy ledge, as if the full
Flood-tide of life were brimming in a gull.

Low Tide

You are different every morning, rocky shore:
Today the tide has gone and left you bare;
But did not leave until the robes she wore
Were wrapped around her little ones with care.
The hidden pools she passed by when she fled,
The cloak of eel-grass gloriously green—
Inviting as the cloak Sir Walter spread
Before the approaching footsteps of his queen—
All these will bring her back. Meanwhile we peer
About the house, wide open, left behind
For our delight: the massive ledges sheer,
Rising like islands, the brown kelps iodined,
Filling our nostrils with the low-tide smells
That waken memory like forgotten bells.

Half Tide

You are different every morning, rocky shore:
Today the half-tide ledges barely show,
Awash with hurrying wavelets that restore
The lacquer quick as sunlight bids it go.
Now periwinkles on yellow rockweed clinging
Like slates of schoolboys turn from black to gray;
Now rockweed blobs explode as we come bringing
The dark blue clams before the rising bay.
You are a promise of more rocks laid bare,
A promise of more ledges to erase,
A middle ground between the here and there,
A child of Neptune with a Janus face.
One loves the ocean brimming, one low tide;
Here for an hour both are satisfied.

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H. G. Wells, Journalist

The Way the World Is Going. By H. G. Wells, Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

THIS is a volume containing reprints of articles, many of which have appeared in the New York *Times,* and also Mr. Wells's lecture in March, 1927, before the Sorbonne. Among the articles we find one which perhaps deserves special attention in which Mr. Wells gives his blessing to Judge Ben Lindsey and expresses his opinion that "popular thought and will are moving steadily in the direction of rationalism, candor, and charity in sexual things and away from emotionalism, concealment, compulsion, and repression." It is, however, to the Sorbonne lecture, previously printed by the Hogarth Press, that we turn as the weightiest chapter in this book and the one most likely to slake our thirst for the distilled essence of Mr. Wells's philosophy.

As Hegel reduced all things to logic and others have reduced all things to history, so Mr. Wells in his Sorbonne lecture reduces all to journalism. Only that, however great, which acknowledges that it is the fruit of its own time, is living fruit, and not a Dead Sea apple, elegant in shape but, for food, dry as dust. "The picture, the music, the book, the research that does not arise out of actual current things—and does not bear upon what we are doing or what we intend to do—does not in reality exist." A culture which endeavors to detach itself from the need and art of coping skilfully and joyfully with immediate experience is false. Like pearls, it is the shining product of a disorder, a glistening grit only to be extracted from the body of a decaying civilization. We must live journalistically, from day to day, ready for change and welcoming it.

Democracy itself, which the progressives regard as an idol and the tories as a fate, is under revision as a system of government. Precisely because it suited the age of our grandfathers and because it has won in this decade complete recognition in universal suffrage, it is unsuited, if unrevised, to our age. With Mr. Norman Angell, the author of "William Clissold" protests against the doctrine of "government by my barber" as distinct from the earlier doctrine of democratic safeguards checking administrators born and bred. We cannot indeed live on a merely negative democracy by safeguards alone, but positive democracy must surely mean more than the bathos of ruling men by an exercise of average ignorance.

With Plato the Socialist, Mr. Wells points out that democracy has spelled relaxation of manners and morals, and the substitution, for that coordination which a reasonable civilization requires and that orderliness which science demands, of an anarchic whirl of human atoms. Mr. Wells certainly does not believe in the heavy hand of dead men's conventions descending with a resounding slap on the tender body of contemporary life; but he does profoundly believe in the right of intelligence and ability to govern. And he sees that democracy has, by its very process of development and by its destruction of the retaining walls of tradition built by other ages with other problems, released a spirit which will sit in judgment on itself. The spirit which first brought into being the modern age of mechanical and scientific civilization now demands the orderly society which is adapted to that civilization and is alone capable of controlling it. The movement can be detected in the world of thought and philosophy as well as in that of affairs. Such democratic romantics as William James have opened the way to an understanding of the importance of the instruments of each civilization in achieving its particular kind of life, and hence to an attitude to life which prefers, despite the romantics, the orderly and efficient and instrumental attitude. "All the world's a factory and all the men and women merely workers."

Whether we agree with Mr. Wells, who has turned New Individualist and a critic of socialism, that the latter is impracticable, depends upon whether we agree that "Socialism is the attempt to democratize economic life as political life has already been democratized," or hold that it is an attempt to secure in part the responsibility in industry which has already been secured in the political arena against the magnates who governed under responsibility to their own consciences alone. The sympathy of men of energy, who keep their souls in the condition of bubbling cauldrons, for other men of energy is natural; but it is not proved that a rational and dynamic society is to be founded by the mere addition of intelligent and energetic men. Mr. Wells, in this chapter which again demonstrates his genius and of which the importance is not to be measured by size, seems himself to admit that the rational society will demand not only intelligence and energy, but also the uniting spirit of a vivid public interest, which amounts to religious devotion, inspiring "a serious minority." And in this he agreees again with the wisest political theorist who ever wrote. Perhaps with Plato also he may come to doubt whether, in accordance with the motto inscribed on the title-page of this book, "all things flow," or whether the pool does but reflect on its surface the passing clouds, while the heavens which display a physical law and the depths of the pool of human nature remain unchanged. If so, a political science, which deals with the permanent, may promote that reasonable society which Mr. Wells has at heart more than the philosophy of what Heraclitus called Flux, Croce calls History, and our author so happily names Journalism.

GEORGE E. G. CATLIN

High Heads

Scarlet Sister Mary. By Julia Peterkin. Bobbs-Merrill. $2.50.

SI MAY-E is a rather beautiful portrait of natural woman overcoming the obstacles in the way of her expression of the life within her. The physical existence of the colorful community Mrs. Peterkin shows us living in the Quarters on a South Carolina plantation in the cabins of their slave grandfathers is simple and natural enough, but its customs, as in the case of primitive people generally, are elaborately evolved. They are Gullah Negroes, not Guineas or Dinkahs, but "Gullahs with tall straight bodies and high heads filled with sense." They have added to their inherited savage traditions those of a church whose various doctrines seem reasonably complicated and contradictory even to men who have known no other sacred book for twenty centuries, and must seem infinitely more so when they are spelled out by a half-literate preacher only recently converted from the efficacy of spells and black magic.

Si May-e was a member of the church before July's desertion of her for her sinful cousin Cinder brought desolation to her heart; and she became a member again when, after mourning all night for the death of her grown son Unex, a vision commanded her to confess her sinful ways. Between these two ages she lived as nature taught her. Even when she stood before the deacons after her confession of sin she held her head high, listening, looking at Doll, a virtuous wife who had denounced Sister Mary's sins with especial ardor because her husband loved Mary. "Maybe," the repentant Si May-e thought, "Doll was not to blame for being fat and mean and deceitful. . . . God made her what she was. He had fixed Doll so she knew nothing of pleasure or sorrow, and spent all her days on foolish, tasteless, half-baked things. Poor duck-legged Doll."

It is true that when her own husband first deserted her, Si May-e "had grieved and pined until all her strength was

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drained and misery had her numb." But she had learned to hold her head up again.

> "Git out and work," Maum Hannah advised. "Sweat some evy day. It'll help you to shed a lot o misery."
>
> Mary asked if she knew what love is.
>
> "Love?" she repeated. "Is I know love. Honey, I knew em fo true. . . .
>
> "Dey is two diffunt kinds of love, Si May-e. Two; eye-love an' heart-love. Eye-love is tricky. . . . Heart-love is diffunt. Diffunt from eye-love as day is from night. Sometimes joy walk long wid em, but e go much wid sorrow. Heart-love and sorrow is one mudder's chillen. When you meets wid heart-love, peace'll leave you. But heart-love is brave. E kin pure smile in the face o deat, honey. E pure shames deat."

And before the old woman left she taught Mary to smoke a pipe for her peace of mind. But Daddy Cudjoe's love charm was even more efficacious. It was made with a drop of blood from her right hand, a bit of skin from her left heel, "a bit of toe nail from a toe on her left foot was added to one hair plucked from her left arm-pit as near to her heart as she could get it. These were all mixed with some sort of conjure root and tied into a tiny scrap of white cloth with a string long enough to go around her neck." Si May-e had secured the charm for July, but July was gone, and one day she discovered that it would work as well on any man, learning that in addition to eye-love and heart-love there is flesh-love.

The products of the flesh-love filled her cabin with gaiety. Every year there was a new baby. Mary had strength to make a living for all, working in the fields, and the older children milked the goat and cut the wood and tidied up the cabin. She even had strength to send away July when, after twenty years, he came home to her with a suit-case full of presents and pockets full of money. But when her first-born, her only heart-child, died, she returned to that mystical religion she had known as a child.

Mrs. Peterkin, like Elizabeth Maddox Roberts, can confine intense experience within the primitive terms she has chosen. Where Miss Roberts is subjective, she is objective. Where Miss Roberts is passionate, she is warmly sympathetic. Her excellent prose, lacking the high imaginative quality of "The Time of Man," still shows a fine sense of the poetic qualities in that native speech she so lovingly transmits.

ALICE BEAL PARSONS

Hurdles

Science in Search of God. By Kirtley F. Mather. Henry Holt and Company. $2.

Humanism and Christianity. By Francis J. McConnell. The Macmillan Company. $1.75.

Catholicism and the Modern Mind. By Michael Williams. The Dial Press. $3.50.

Religion Coming of Age. By Roy Wood Sellars. The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

HERE are four books addressed to me and to the millions of other people who, statistics show, are not affiliated with any church. I have read them carefully, but there is no more likelihood of my going to church next Sunday than there was of my going last. They are in varying degree interesting books, and even the worst of them is not wholly preposterous, but in each of them there is a point beyond which I will not follow the author.

Kirtley F. Mather is professor of geology at Harvard. He begins by discussing science and the scientific view of the universe in austere and unchallengeable terms; before he is through, he has accepted God, free will, miracles, prayer, and immortality. Reading the book is a little like attending a show put on by a magician: you are sure that the black hat is perfectly empty, but all of a sudden there is the rabbit. Professor Mather has been talking about electrons; he makes a few quick leaps and he is talking about God. Reducing his five hundred words to fifty, we find the essential steps in the argument to be these:

> The world of sense perception is a manifestation of energy. The nature of Eternal Energy, the Ultimate Reality, [those capitals are a mighty jump in themselves] may be discovered by observing what it does. . . . Man possesses other attributes than those of his body alone. . . . The various attributes which we say pertain to his soul, are just as real as eye or ear. They too must be a response to something in his environment. . . . Thus in a scientific age the search for God leads to a new answer to the ancient question. The answer is theism.

As is obvious, anyone who could discover God by such a method would have no difficulty in swallowing any part of traditional theology that he found appetizing. If Professor Mather does not bother to demonstrate the existence of the Trinity, it is almost certainly because his religious background did not fill him with reverence for that particular dogma. Most of his reasoning aptly illustrates Professor Sellars's statement that "the theism of physical scientists is largely an emotional inheritance." The "reconcilers" doubtless believe that they are rendering valiant service in an age of uncertainty, but most of them do little but darken counsel. Though their testimony is worth as much as the testimony of other laymen, and no more, their eminence in their particular fields proves highly persuasive. Ministers who insist, whenever a scientist timidly confesses to atheism, that the place of the scientist is in the laboratory, rush open-armed to greet the physicist and astronomer who come bringing in the sheaves of pious verbiage.

As a matter of cold reason, I should expect a Methodist bishop to know more about theology than any geologist, however eminent, and a comparison of "Science in Search of God" with "Humanism and Christianity" confirms that belief. Bishop McConnell's book, like Professor Mather's tries to lead the unbeliever along by easy steps, starting with human nature, however, rather than science. The greater part of the little volume is occupied with an intelligent discussion of how life in this world can be made better. Only in the last chapter does the bishop shift the argument to the theological level, utilizing the personalistic philosophy of Borden P. Bowne to accomplish the transition. There is no space here to discuss personalism but, unconvincing as I find it, I recognize that it is based on sounder logic than the amateur methods of the Harvard geologist. It smacks a little of prestidigitation, but it is by no means intellectually unrespectable as philosophic systems go.

What does give me pause is the realization that it is this philosophy which makes it possible for Bishop McConnell to be a Methodist. And, much as I admire McConnell's humanitarian zeal, I cannot forget that it is only a step removed from the equally zealous humanitarianism of the Board of Prohibition, Temperance, and Public Morals. So long as the desire for a better world is linked with traditional theology, it is in danger, at least, of being linked with traditional morality.

I respectfully decline, therefore, to follow either the professor or the bishop, and I brace myself for a different type of attack. If anything is clear about Catholicism, it is that the Holy Church is exceedingly shrewd, and the Holy Church seldom wastes time in trying to lead the heretic along smooth paths. It prefers violent methods even if, having abjured physical violence, it contents itself with the written or spoken word. Michael Williams does not cajole; he does not try to smuggle us infidels across the boundary line of difficult dogma. He

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stations himself behind the bulwark of Catholic theology, and trains his high-powered guns on the weak spots in the enemy's defense. He is a good journalist; he is witty; he is intelligent. His method is to hit hard, and then to ask us if we wouldn't like to be where we could do the hitting. The book is full of entertaining and praiseworthy comments on politics, science, books, Mr. Mencken, and Mr. Bryan. And Williams has learned from Chesterton and Belloc the trick of making it appear that he owes his wit and wisdom solely to the fact that he is a Catholic.

The method is excellent, but what a leap it is that Mr. Williams asks us to make! We are to believe not merely in God, immortality, and prayer, but also in the Virgin Birth, the infallibility of the pope, transubstantiation, private property, the sanctity of the home (i.e., no birth control), and the beauty of the monastic and conventual life. Yet it is quite clear that many contemporaries have found it easier to make the big jump into the Catholic fold than the little jump into the liberal Protestant camp, and Mr. Williams draws much comfort from that fact. I do not begrudge him his satisfaction, but I should like to point out that what Gilbert Murray calls the failure of nerve usually becomes apparent after a war, and it is the failure of nerve that is sending intellectuals into the arms of Rome.

If we can keep our nerve, we shall find Mr. Williams's book profitable reading, but we are more likely to be guided by what Sellars has written in "Religion Coming of Age." During several years of fairly constant perusal of religious literature I have been looking for such a book as this. Professor Sellars, after clearly defining the aims of philosophy and competently outlining the history of religion, raises the traditional theological questions. In answering them, he comes to the conclusion that there is no reason for belief in immortality and that man has no "cosmic companion." But this is neither the ranting of the professional atheist nor the bewildered, chaotic moaning of the romantic pessimist. Sellars, fully aware of what has happened to nineteenth-century materialism, draws upon the work of the physicists and upon the reflections which such philosophers as Whitehead have based upon modern physics. He employs philosophical realism both as a weapon and as a tool. He discriminatingly avails himself of what psychology and the social sciences have to offer. The result is a view of the universe which provides the outlines at least of that synthesis of modern thought and knowledge which has been so long needed. Thoroughly naturalistic, Sellars's philosophy nevertheless makes room for values, for human effort, for human ambitions. Here is a difficult but trustworthy path between the bogs of romantic pessimism and the graveyards of tradition and authority.

There is one point, however, at which I cannot follow Professor Sellars. I might cavil at his use of the term religion, but I am willing he should have the word if he wants it. What I do object to is his statement that "we should stand by the churches but demand more of them." What is the use? Passing over the fact that very few churches would permit us, holding such views as Sellars's, to stand by them, what is there to be gained by our cooperating with any agency which is almost certain to hamper our every move? If we believe in the imaginative discovery of fresh human values and in the creation of means for obtaining these chosen ends, there are institutions which will permit us to work with vastly less friction than the churches. Erasmus Darwin said more than a century ago that Unitarianism was a feather-bed on which those who had fallen from grace could comfortably land, and the liberal churches retain, I fear, too much of the somnolent quality with which beds are associated. There is far more vigor outside them than inside. And so, despite my admiration for Mr. Sellars's book, I shall not go to church next Sunday.

GRANVILLE HICKS

REBECCA WEST, one of the contributors to "BOOKS"

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The Religion of Rotary

The American Omen. By Garet Garrett. E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.50.

THIS is the glad stuff of American industry, the kind that goes over big in the *Saturday Evening Post.* It is all there—the automatic machine and the new power ("fifty tame slaves per capita," forty of them in the garage), limitless ability to produce, the consequent fallacy of saving and the virtue of spending (blessed doctrine that it is), the beautiful new machine-made harmony of interest whereby the employer becomes chief booster for high wages and the employee for high profits, and last but not least the gospel of service. There is a touching picture, in a manner reminiscent of Leonardo da Vinci's "Last Supper," of a hundred and twenty-five thousand men in two thousand cities sitting down at midday "under a self-imposed rule of compulsory attendance beneath the slogan of Service Above Self." It is all very affecting, and, as Mr. Garrett so well points out, one can only pity, not blame, the inhabitants of outlying parts like Europe for their failure to understand. They still believe in the exploded superstitions of political economy, not realizing, as we do, that its dogmas, like that of infant damnation, shadow the lives only of those people unlucky enough to believe them.

Now, to unrepentant scoffers like the reviewer all this would be uproariously funny if it were not so deadly serious. But Mr. Garrett is in earnest as he expounds this new religion of American business, for it is no less. Of course, it is not true. Most religions are not. Modern business has not repealed the laws of political economy, no matter if applied science has disclosed to the business man astounding new powers of production. It was, indeed, an American economist, the late Professor Patten, who thirty years ago prophetically pointed out the differences between a deficit and a surplus civilization, a civilization whose possibilities we are just beginning to explore. But all this does not lessen the importance of Mr. Garrett's snappily expressed religion. Convert business men, by any kind of religious experience or exhortation, to the profitableness of high wages, short hours, regular operation, and widely distributed buying power, and they will begin to act differently from men who hold the opposite beliefs. And their actions, it so happens, will be much more nearly in accordance with the best interests of the community, including themselves. It is exactly this which is happening today. I suspect that the results of Mr. Garrett's preaching among business men are likely to be almost all to the good, provided the rest of us do not take his doctrine as a soporific. With all its comicalities, I have found his book an interesting and stimulating performance, really useful reading for highbrow bewailers.

HENRY RAYMOND MUSSEY

Bits of Earth and Water

Cawdor and Other Poems. By Robinson Jeffers. Horace Liveright. $2.50.

MR. JEFFERS'S new story is as simple in outline as it is lurid. Cawdor, an old man of California, marries Fera Martial, a young girl who has been chained by circumstance to another old man, her dying father. While Martial slowly gives up his breath Fera falls in love with young Hood Cawdor, come home from hunting in the hills; but is repulsed; whereon with lies she rouses enough jealousy in her husband to make him murder his son by tumbling him over a precipice. The conclusion is that Cawdor, discovering the truth too late, tears out his eyes with a piece of chipped flint and sits down to wait for the sheriff.

The outline, however, is not all. The poetry is in the way Mr. Jeffers tells his tale, and in the meaning—or lack of meaning—which he finds in it. As to his way, it is the way of the great tragic poets, whom Mr. Jeffers has been bold enough to take as his masters. Cawdor, obviously, is another Oedipus; Hood is another Hippolytus, with a touch of Attis at one point; and the manner from first to last has much in it of Shakespeare, as well as of Webster and the other late Elizabethans who offered no relief from terror and woe. I mean this really as praise. Imitators of Euripides, Sophocles, and Shakespeare are usually ridiculous, but Jeffers is not because he is of their company; he dredges, as they dredged, too deep in the mud of mortality not to come up with images and rhythms terrible in their force and beautiful in their explainable strangeness. Hence his uniqueness among American poets, and his very high rank.

As to Mr. Jeffers's refusal to find significance in his people's tragedy, that does remove him from the immediate company of his masters, though the fault may be not his but the modern world's. For Sophocles and Shakespeare much was involved in the downfall of great men. For Mr. Jeffers there are no great men, and all men, indeed, are nothing but "passionate bits of earth and water" whose appearance on the earth is only a flicker across the face of that wilderness of stone and lightning which alone he admires. On the jacket of his book Mr. Jeffers suggests that human affairs, "minimized to ridicule" against the ocean and the stars in "Tamar" and "The Women of Point Sur," here "reclaim a little dignity" from their association with the dry land of the eastward mountains. But I do not find dignity in Fera and Cawdor, whose pigmy bodies are fretted to the same decay and burned by the same ineffectual fires that ravaged Tamar. For all their passion they are not powerful, and we are left with the impression of a vast poetic talent expending itself upon mere "children grown lewd." The fact that Mr. Jeffers knows all this, and intends it, does not alter the fact that he has failed to achieve an important brand of tragedy. So, of course, all modern poets have failed.

Mr. Jeffers's long free lines have much of the time such strength—carrying as they do the burden of lightning, sleeping stone, flight of eagles, and drive of rain—that one could wish at other times for less suspicion of prose than comes, perhaps inevitably, with a metrical measure incapable of defining itself as a form. But doubtless Mr. Jeffers should not be tampered with. The vehicle of his verse was slowly and painfully built, and it may be left alone in its power. It will outride any storm.

MARK VAN DOREN

Books in Brief

A Journey to the Land of Eden, and Other Papers. By William Byrd. Macy-Masius. $2.50.

Nick of the Woods. By Robert Montgomery Bird. Macy-Masius. $2.50 each.

These attractive volumes are numbers four and five of the excellent American Bookshelf—a reprint of certain fine old books that time has not robbed of vitality. Few works in our eighteenth-century library are so readable or so authentic as Colonel Byrd's "History of the Dividing Line," which has long been nearly inaccessible. Written in 1728—just two hundred years ago—as an informal journal of a surveying expedition, it is a delightful document of colonial life that any reader will enjoy. Colonel Byrd of Westover was not only the first gentleman of Virginia, but he had mingled with the

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best society in London and possessed the cleverness and charm of a Queen Anne wit. His pages are ampler than those of Madame Knight's "Journal" and wittier and more realistic than Crèvecœur's "Letters." As for Robert Montgomery Bird's "Nick of the Woods," let it be said flatly that it is the best Indian story among our earlier novels. Perhaps this reviewer has cultivated a special liking for it, but for hair-raising pictures of the fierce blood-feud between Borderer and Indian that ravaged the Kentucky frontier there is nothing to equal it in Cooper or elsewhere. The figure of Nick the Quaker, who under the guise of a disciple of peace is a fierce hunter of men, is not less than uncanny, and "Roaring Ralph Stackpole"—an extravagant figure embodying the early conception of frontier humor—suggests Mike Fink and Davy Crockett. The tale was first issued in 1837 and has gone through more than a score of editions. Both volumes are beautifully printed and demand a place in one's library.

When the Turtles Sing and Other Unusual Tales. By Don Marquis. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.

Mr. Marquis and Mr. Mencken are the only two contemporary American writers who have invented a language. Some of the present tales are about the Old Soak and some are not, but they are all written in that vein of genuine though somewhat bibulous eloquence which gives to Mr. Marquis's writing a racy flavor all its own.

Leninism. By Joseph Stalin. Translated from the Russian by Eden and Cedar Paul. International Publishers. $2.50.

Stalin interprets Lenin's interpretation of Marx, in systematic refutation of Trotzky, Zinoviev, et al. Clear thought, excellent translation, and convenient format combine to make accessible to Anglo-Saxons this side of a controversy still waged in the public prints of Moscow.

Music

Respighi and Schubert

IN his setting of Hauptmann's "Sunken Bell" Ottorino Respighi has attempted a task of Olympian difficulty. An Italian of Italians, he has bravely ventured into the domain of the allegorical and metaphysical, that land of the ideal which Wagner and Strauss coveted in "Parsifal" and "Zarathustra" and which, perhaps, only Debussy among the moderns has fully penetrated. For Hauptmann's play is a strangely romantic combination of folk-lore and Nietzschian philosophy and withal a wholly Germanic creation in mood and essence. As such it has a vitality and charm which captivated New York a quarter of a centurly ago and it is easy to understand how Signor Respighi came under the spell of such a potent libretto. Furthermore, he is to be commended for his choice of a text so vastly superior to the average vehicle of operatic expression.

The question then follows—How has Respighi succeeded in welding the resources of the modern Italian idiom with this highly imaginative and somewhat illusive play? And in answering this it must indeed be admitted that he has been hampered not a little by the heavy tradition of the Italian style, and more especially by the trend of Italian opera since the advent of Puccini. The opulent obviousness of melodic line, the highly seasoned quality of harmonic content, above all the lurid delight in overtensed orchestration is something that few Italians of these latter days have succeeded wholly in avoiding. Nor is Respighi operatically among this number.

He has indeed made sturdy efforts to remain aloof from the pitfalls of modern Italian operatic procedure and to retain

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his own musical entity, but his success here has been only partial. To be sure, he provides a certain amount of lyric persuasiveness and his score has all the earmarks of sincere and careful workmanship, as well as expert orchestration. But when all is said and done his music is distinctly lacking in depth of emotional power and in the subtle feeling for the supernatural with which Hauptmann delights in endowing his characters. Moreover, the Germanic folk elements in this play are (with the exception of one snatch of a refrain) all but passed over.

Frankly, I am puzzled at Signor Respighi's over-confidence in his power of self-translation, so to speak, in choosing a text so foreign to his own inherent talents and capabilities, not to mention the boundaries of the Italian temperament. For among Europeans, at any rate, nationalism seems to be an all-encompassing and all-engrossing barrier, and those composers seem to be the most successful who, remembering the tenets of the Russian "band of invincibles," strive to render immortal the genius and tradition of their own soil. Signor Respighi has already demonstrated in his classical recastings and in his "Pines of Rome" how fervently he understands the peculiar genius of his country, past and present. May we not hope for future works from his pen that will reveal further the Italian *raison d'être*?

One of the important, but likewise depressing, events of the autumn season was the Memorial Schubert Concert given recently by the Philharmonic Symphony Society. The concert was arranged as part of the Schubert centennial, and more especially to bring before the public Kurt Atterberg's prize symphony (the prize had been offered by the Columbia Phonograph Company for that symphony written in lyric vein which best carried out the Schubert tradition). Following the performance of this work and an interlude of selections from "Rosamunde," the "Unfinished Symphony" was played. It would be difficult to determine which showed the more absolute mediocrity, the quality of the Atterberg symphony or the reading of the "Unfinished Symphony" led with conspicuous lack of either poise or inspiration by Mr. Mengelberg. It is common knowledge that Schubert must be interpreted with entire simplicity and absence of sentimentalism; the vital pulse of the music must never be allowed to flag. Mr. Mengelberg sinned in both respects. The purity of Schubert's melodic line was marred and the incandescence of the music itself all but lost by the leader's slow-jointed, heavy conducting. Mr. Mengelberg, as it appears to more than one commentator, seems to be allowing himself to decline into the position of a routine or sub-routine drill-master rather than the highly creative conductor who came to us a few years ago. The orchestra itself, especially in the string section, seems deficient in that smoothness and beauty of tone that was its former wont, and this especially in comparison with one or two recently visiting organizations. Why, with the resources of the world to draw upon, can this not be remedied?

As to the Atterberg symphony, suffice it to say that in no fitting fashion does it lay a wreath at the monument of Schubert's deathless memory, not does it for a moment succeed in creating the illusion of a work in the Schubertian vein.

Outside of and beyond this demonstration in Schubert's honor, it must be regretted that the season thus far shows such a surprising dearth of interesting and worth-while novelties. We shrug our shoulders in disappointment at much of the music of today, while at the same time we are aware that many splendid examples of the modern European national schools are as yet unheard on this side of the Atlantic. Might it not be well for some of our conductors and impresarios to delve a little more assiduously among the unplayed scores of Fauré, Chausson, Dukas, not to mention Glinka, Borodin, Rimsky Korsakoff, and many others?

LAWRENCE ADLER

Drama

The Cradle Song—Second Verse

FOR the first production in a theater renamed in her honor Ethel Barrymore has chosen "The Kingdom of God," by that same Martinez Sierra whose "Cradle Song" served Miss Le Gallienne so well. In it she is called upon to portray a sister of charity at three stages of her career, and the new play is, in theme and atmosphere, identical with the former one. The two have undoubtedly a flavor of their own, but their distinction is due less to any important originality on the part of the author than to the fact that his delicately sentimental treatment of familiar emotions seems exotically charming in a theater which has moved a long way from his preoccupations. There is nothing either new or, for that matter, very significant in his romantic treatment of orphans, nuns, and unmarried mothers, but we had almost forgotten their sentimental possibilities and he seems fresh partly because he is so stale.

Regarding the narrow lives of his characters with a mildly skeptical eye which permits him to see little ironies here and there, he is, nevertheless, romantically obsessed with the idea of a life spent out of the world, and he gives a highly prettified view of it. His nuns have their foibles, to be sure, but they have no vices. They are perfect in abnegation and charity; and through their inexperienced eyes the author presents us with a sweetly simplified view of human nature. There is no action but there is instead a series of pathetic episodes. Abandoned mothers clutch their new-born infants wildly to their breasts; underfed orphan girls dream Cinderella dreams; and very manly little boys go forth to redeem the world. There is charm of a kind but there is neither reality nor strength.

Truly religious drama has a power of its own, but Sierra is obviously no orthodox believer. He sees his characters through the pathos of a lost faith and it is this very fact which is responsible for the pervading sentimentalization. Monasticism can be justified only upon theological principles, for it is unimpressive unless it can be considered not merely as a flight away from the world, but as a flight toward God as well. To Sierra, however, it can be no more than a pretty gesture and hence material for no more than a pretty play. He has emerged from the supernatural world, but he is unwilling to look the real one in the face, and sentimentality of some sort is always the result of such a falling between two stools.

Miss Barrymore is essentially a comedy actress, and it is evidently not easy to find plays suited to her personality. In the first place her range is almost as narrow as that of most of our actresses, and in the second place her "type" is exploited less often than once it was. She realizes almost perfectly Barrie's ideal of sweetness combined with a mocking impudence, but the Barriesque female finds small place in the current tradition. Though she played women of the world in the days when a very little worldliness went a long way with women, she seems, among the sophisticated Amazons of modern comedy, inevitably old-fashioned.

Miss Barrymore belongs, in a word, to the age of the Lady. Even in her boldness she is as shy as a lady should be and she is "womanly" according to the specifications of a romantic ideal. In the days when sex appeal was still unmentioned she was conspicuous for her "charm." She was comedy when it was just beginning to be discovered that women were people, and she fitted the leading role in all those coy little plays in which the heroine startled the male characters out of their wits by suddenly exhibiting some slight gift for irony. But alas for the womanly woman and the modest minx! They have disappeared from the stage and perhaps from life—leaving Miss

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Barrymore—who was once considered almost naughty—with nothing to do except take refuge in a nunnery.

"That Ferguson Family" (Little Theater), a comedy of small-town life, is amusing in an unassuming way. "Sign of the Leopard" (National Theater) is a very simple-minded crook play by the English phenomenon, Edgar Wallace.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Neither Maid, Wife, nor Widow

"AFTER DARK," now playing at Christopher Morley's Old Rialto Theater, 118 Hudson Street, Hoboken, gives an evening of high entertainment. In the revival of the old melodrama there is so happy a combination of directing, of acting, and of set that it stands out as something approaching perfection. "After Dark" is played seriously and yet pervading it is an overtone of most delicate satire. And it is this mingling of seriousness and almost imperceptible ironic emphasis that makes the revival a work of art. It was Cleon Throckmorton who put his thumb into the shelves of the New York Public Library and pulled out this dusty but priceless plum for which he made the delightful sets.

There are two opinions concerning the famous old melodrama. One is that it was always sophisticated hokum. I believe firmly in the other: that the author was sincere in his use of deep blacks and luminous whites; that he shuddered at the murky heart of Bellingham and his cringing confederate Dicey Morris, owner of the ill-famed Germania Gardens; that it was with the unction of an honest heart that he portrayed the purity of Eliza, wife of the hounded George Medhurst, and delighted in the honor and womanly compassion of sweet Miss Edgerton.

Never for a moment is "After Dark" played patronizingly or with tongue indecorously in cheek. Mr. Harry Wagstaff Gribble has directed the play in such fashion that the old thriller unfolds itself in all its rich floweriness. The result is unique. It is one of those performances which creates a creative audience. Delicious, rocking laughter wells up from the spectators. People go away to use the catchwords of the play and all Hoboken sings over its near-beer—for which the city is so justly famous—"We Never Speak as We Pass By."

The cast is all good. Vernon Rich as the hounded Medhurst and Mr. B. Cass—Gordon Chumley—gave performances of delightful subtlety. Mr. Arthur C. Morris as Old Tom is excellent, but Marcia Hanan of the melting big blue eyes walks off with my bouquet. She does a lovely piece of work as Eliza—neither maid, wife, nor widow. Eliza's attempted suicide and rescue and Tom's reformation by Eliza—"You saved me, now let me save you"—are perfect. The rescue of the noble Captain Chumley by Old Tom in the Lackawanna tunnel is a gorgeous moment and, as the program says, "one of the most novel mechanical effects ever seen on the stage." My favorite scene is the one between the two girls—Rose Edgerton, played by Miss V. Gale, and Eliza. In that scene the unconscious comedy rises to a sublime height, yet in the charming pictures made by the two young girls through their high-flown talk ("I must not succumb to womanly collapse") the spirit of another age detaches itself. The spirited Germania Garden scene, where Gordon Chumley is drugged, comes next on my list of favorites. It is here that Larry Bolton sings the delightful songs of the period, "Take Back the Heart Thou Gavest Me" and "We Never Speak as We Pass By."

It was a lucky day for New York theatergoers when Christopher Morley, Conrad Millikin, Henry Wagstaff Gribble, and Cleon Throckmorton decided to give plays in Hoboken.

MARY HEATON VORSE

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International Relations Section

Black Ivory and White Gold in Cuba

By ARNOLD ROLLER

CUBA'S white gold, the source of its "national prosperity," depends for its future role in the national economy of the country on the size of its black population. The blacker Cuba becomes, the more white sugar will it be able to pour out in competition with the rest of the world. The production of sugar in Cuba depends entirely on black labor, most of it imported from Haiti, Jamaica, and the other Antilles, in a form which differs from the old slave traffic only by a few legalistic formalities. The Negroes are brought to Cuba in ships equipped as the slave ships of old and delivered for a premium of $15 to $20 each to the sugar companies on the basis of labor contracts signed by the Negroes with a finger-print.

Some of this traffic was even too crude for the Cuban Government, which otherwise permits and favors this means toward fostering the national industry, and it was forced recently to expel an American citizen, Harry Hackleton, from the territory for having disregarded the formalities by importing more slaves than required and selling them at only $15 each. This business netted him, according to the Cuban newspapers, "a fabulous fortune" in the few years he was engaged in this time-honored pursuit of his forefathers.

This, of course, did not stop the importation of blacks into the island, which suffers greatly from unemployment of the native workers. Negroes and "dark Mulattoes" constitute about one-third of the total population of Cuba. The continuous racial intermingling, diluting the Negro strain, has produced a race of light Mulattoes. In Cuba this diluted strain is gradually merged into the white population and the light Mulattoes are considered as whites. The whites, particularly the workers, small shopkeepers and artisans, frequently marry Mulatto girls or live in free unions with them and the children of these unions are always considered whites. Somehow, the Cuban Mulatto women resemble much more the native white women and they blend much better with the Spanish type than with the "Anglo-Saxon type" of the United States.

Many who in Cuba are considered whites would still be called "Negroes" in the United States, where any degree of Negro blood, however small, if known—or even suspected—is sufficient to class a person as non-white, subject to all the legal and social discriminations against Negroes. Though Negroes and dark Mulattoes are not admitted in the "aristocratic" society of Cuba, there is no segregation or discrimination in jobs, in industry, in government employment, in schools or colleges. Often Negro officers command white soldiers; some of them hold high positions in the army and in the government. They work in all skilled trades, are treated as equals in all trade unions. No Cuban restaurant or theater would think of refusing them entrance or service, which is all contrary to the custom in the United States.

This state of affairs is slowly being changed by the Americans, whose number and economic influence increase continuously. Though it is expressly against the Cuban law, the hotels owned by Americans or catering to Americans will not admit Negroes or Mulattoes. The Americans in their industrial enterprises make their own laws, disregarding the Cuban laws, and are establishing a kind of industrial extraterritoriality in this respect. The large sugar mills, owned by the United Fruit Company, have erected whole towns for their various employees on the territory owned by the company; thus, in the town of Banes, situated on land owned by the United Fruit Company, the firm has introduced the "American" regime, absolute prohibition for all races, and complete segregation of American whites, Cubans, and Negroes. In some special streets only white Americans live, in other streets only white Cubans live, and in others only the "colored." No Negro man, woman, or child is allowed to enter the streets in which the white Cubans live and, of course, still less where the Americans reside. But even the white Cubans, who are generally the skilled workers and foremen in the mills and plantations, are strictly forbidden—in their own country—to enter the streets reserved for the white Americans. At night barriers are lowered and the three different districts, harboring the three different races and classes, are locked against one another.

But the Negro problem is also becoming an acute problem with the Cuban natives. The probability and the hope of many Cubans that in time the Mulattoes and Negroes will be completely absorbed, and thus make the Cuban nation a homogeneous race, is fast vanishing. The cause of this is found in the condition of the sugar industry. Seeking to reduce the cost of production, the sugar barons found that it would be impossible further to reduce the wages of the Cuban workers. Their wages were already so low, so near the limit of bare existence, that any attempt at reduction would have caused widespread revolt, particularly as the workers are well organized. The sugar companies, therefore, decided upon the expedient of importing inarticulate blacks, as was done in the days before slavery was legally abolished. It was easy to circumvent the law by the legal fiction of labor contracts, with absolutely illiterate Negroes who did not understand the language of the country. These were imported both from Haiti, where the Negroes speak a French dialect, and from Jamaica, where they speak English. Thus, these imported Negroes do not understand each other nor the Cubans who speak Spanish. This "black ivory" trade was allowed by a special decree, promulgated in 1912 by the then President, Jose Miguel Gomez.

The Americans, who carried their competition against the Cuban sugar growers right into Cuban territory, by establishing there large mills and plantations improved upon the slave-trade methods. Thus the General Sugar Company stimulated the trade in blacks by paying $25 for every Negro delivered on its reservations. Here the Negroes remain virtual prisoners until after the crop is gathered.

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The Haitian and Jamaican Negroes are induced to come to Cuba under promises of high wages, unknown in their own islands. Once in Cuba, they are led, surrounded by armed guards, to the sugar plantations and housed there in large, wooden barracks in which many couples live and sleep without any partitions between them, and without any sanitary provisions, except a hole in the ground at the end of the structure.

As they cannot get out of the inclosure during the entire time of their contract, they must buy all their provisions in the company stores, and usually, at the end of the crop, are indebted to the contractor. Many remain in Cuba and mix with the native Negro population. Some remain on the plantation over the dead season and shift for themselves as best they can. The masters, however, are often kind enough to allow them to remain in the barracks without exacting rent from them during the off season, thus saving the expenses for the importation of and payment for new slaves. In the inclosure the Negroes are "protected" by armed company guards, equipped with rifles and rubber whips, who shoot at any one attempting to escape.

Their pay is rarely more than 50 or 60 cents per hundred *arrobas* (2,500 pounds of sugar-cane cut), and as the most skilled workers are able to cut only about 200 *arrobas* per day the average earnings of these men are about 60 to 80 cents per day during the few months of crop gathering. There were protests and revolts against bad treatment. They were settled by the guns of the guards. Some of these repressions went so far that the British Government found it necessary to protest against the maltreatment of its subjects and requested compensations.

The influx of the Haitians and Jamaicans has increased considerably since the inception of this modern slave trade. Thus, from the total number of 709 Jamaicans and 233 Haitians who arrived in Cuba in 1912, the number rose to 27,088 Jamaicans and 35,971 Haitians in 1920, i.e., an influx of 63,000 foreign Negroes into a population of less than three millions. The number of imported Negroes decreased, however, to about 25,000 in 1921 and dropped suddenly to 5,000 in 1922, the year of the sugar crisis.

The importation was later resumed and in 1924 the number of Negroes imported from Haiti and Jamaica was again 26,000. Since 1921 the number of Jamaicans has been steadily decreasing, probably partly due to the protection and warnings of the British Government and partly because Jamaicans are much less illiterate than the Haitians. In 1927 the number of Haitians who arrived in Cuba was 14,312 and of Jamaicans only 2,348. These, together with a few hundred other black Antillans, make about 17,000 new Negro arrivals in 1927 out of a total immigration of 31,515 persons. The next largest contingent of immigrants consisted of Spaniards, 8,755; Polish and Russian Jews, 984; Palestinian Jews, 285, and Syrians, 296. The black immigration is larger than the total white immigration.

Many Negroes from Haiti bring with them the Voodoo cult and keep alive among the Cuban Negroes the traditions of *ñañegismo*, the religious, medicinal, and witch practices, sometimes even accompanied by cannibalistic rites. At the beginning of 1928 it seemed as if an end would be made to the slave traffic and the "negrification" of Cuba, when the Government decided to restrict the output of sugar to 4,000,000 tons per year. It was announced that from now on the importation of Negroes would be prohibited and that 17,000 imported Negroes would be sent back to their countries. But in the meantime the international conference for the restriction of sugar production failed and Cuba declared that consequently it would remove all restrictions on the sugar output, even at the risk of driving the price of sugar still further down. More sugar means cheaper sugar and cheaper sugar requires more Negro labor. And quite recently the United Fruit Company alone obtained from the Cuban Government the permission to import 9,600 Negroes for work in its plantation.

The imported Negroes are not looked upon with friendly eyes by the native workers, as they are used as strike-breakers and in general are lowering the standard of living of the native workers, colored and white alike. The American supermasters of the island are by no means anxious to prevent this slow africanization or "colorization" of their large autonomous sugar plantation island. This Africanization is only partly offset by the immigration of whites from Europe, who, due to the American immigration policy, are stranded in Cuba.

It is not improbable that this white immigration may be stopped in the near future, because many of the white immigrants, particularly the Spaniards and the Jews, are suspected of being susceptible to radical ideas. Many Jews are, in fact, active in the local labor organizations as soon as they arrive on the island and, therefore, white immigrants are not so welcome as the willing, submissive blacks from Haiti.

Contributors to This Issue

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ALICE BEAL PARSONS will publish in February a new novel, "The Insider."

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ARNOLD ROLLER is the pen-name of the Latin-American editor of a news agency, who has traveled widely in Latin America.

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